MALVALOCA

SERAFÍN AND JOAQUÍN
ÁLVAREZ QUINTERO

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MALVALOCA

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SERAFÍN AND JOAQUÍN ÁLVAREZ QUINTERO

MALVALOCA

A Drama in Three Acts

(Suggested by an Andalusian Song)

BY

SERAFÍN AND JOAQUÍN ÁLVAREZ QUINTERO

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH BY

JACOB S. FASSETT, JR.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

JOHN GARRETT UNDERHILL

GARDEN CITY NEW YORK

DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY

1916

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JACOB S. FASSETT, JR.

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To
MARCELINO MENÉNDEZ Y PELAYO

INTRODUCTION

Serafín and Joaquín Álvarez Quintero were born in Utrera, a railway junction on the Seville-Cadiz line, not far from the famous city of Jérez de la Frontera. Serafín, the elder, was born in March, 1871, Joaquín in January two years later. While they were still very young, the family removed to Seville, where their first farce, *Esgrima y amor* ("Love and Fencing"), a trifle in one act, was performed when Serafín was not yet seventeen years old. The success of this venture was such that the brothers, like Murillo and Velázquez, went up to Madrid, where a second farce was acted at the Teatro Español after the usual heart-breaking experiences which were destined in this case to terminate in failure. It was not until 1898 that they achieved an assured position through the reception accorded to *La buena Sombra*, a *sainete*, or farce, with incidental music, and laid thereby the foundations for the career of uninterrupted success which has won them a host of friends

and world-wide reputation, together with the largest rewards which are possible to the literary life in Spain.

The Brothers Quintero are modernists by temperament and by artistic affiliation. The interest of a play, in their conception, does not lie in what is about to happen, but in what is happening at the moment, of which the future promise is but a phase. Art cannot subsist upon mere illusion, it derives its strength from observation, from its closeness to life. It remained for the Quinteros to take an insignificant subject, present it simply through a succession of commonplace events of which the protagonists were neither persons of remarkable originality nor of intellectual power, were torn by no heroic passions nor involved in any enterprise at all spectacular, abnormal, bizarre, or strange, and yet in so doing to produce a series of plays of universal appeal, which have continued to be in constant demand in theatres of every class throughout the land. "Our ideal," they wrote, "is to make the spectators forget that they are in the theatre during the performance of our plays."

An ideal of this nature was not easy of realization. At first the task seemed impossible. *Las Flores*,

commonly considered their most notable piece of work, was a failure when it was produced in 1901. It was urged that it was not a play, or that if it was, it was a bad one. It lacked action and intrigue—as if, in the words of Jacinto Octavio Picón, a play in which three girls are married off could possibly lack action or intrigue! "It is true that there is no intrigue in the conventional sense, no bearing of false witness, no disguises, no assumed names, no *quid pro quo*, no adventures. There is nothing which exaggerates nor falsifies the portrayal of life, nor which imitates it in its more violent aspects, in the abnormal or the exceptional. If the incidents which occur in *Las Flores* and the manner of their taking place are more than sufficient to justify us in characterizing it as a beautiful comedy, in respect to form its merits are even greater still. The conversations are so natural, the charm and tenderness which are always present are so appropriate to the persons by whom they are expressed, the interruptions are so spontaneous and so abundantly justified that there are moments not only, but long stretches of time when every suggestion of fiction or of the theatre is banished from the mind, erased, obscured, overcome by the sovereign splendor of truth.

The bloom of *Las Flores* was, however, premature. The public was not yet prepared to appreciate an art that was so delicate. The theatre was in a state of transition, uncertain of what was to come. Echégaray still wrote fitfully, while the leading figure, Galdós, was ushering in the new era before a patronizing, incredulous public, sustained in his endeavor by the powerful aid of María Guerrero and Fernando Díaz de Mendoza. The Generation of '98, that restless body of young men which was in a few years to revolutionize the literature of the country, applying a clearer and more relentless criticism to art than was to be found elsewhere in Europe, had just begun its work. Benavente, Rubén Darío, Azorín, Antonio and Manuel Machado, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Valle-Inclán, Martínez Sierra were still names of the future. The Quinteros continued patiently to develop their technique, but they produced no second *Las Flores*. Their method became more precisely adapted to the purposes in hand, their style an instrument of nicer and freer expression. *El Patio*, *Los Galeotes* ("The Galeotes") *La Dicha ajena* ("The Happiness of Others") and *Las de Caín* ("The Daughters of Cain") represent earlier stages of the evolution, although all were received with the accus-

tomed approbation of the public. With the production of "Malvaloca" by the Guerrero-Mendoza Company at the Princesa Theatre in 1912, the quality of their art appears clearly defined, while the style has attained to mastery. "Malvaloca," although not the least faultless of their plays, is among the most successful and thoroughly typical. It was crowned by the Spanish Academy.

The Quinteros are chroniclers of the life of Andalusia. By preference they write in the Andalusian dialect, a softened form of Spanish, bearing a relation to the Castilian analogous to that in which the southern dialects of the United States stand to literary English, though vastly more corrupt. The incidents with which they deal are real—the fruits of experience patiently garnered, of a sympathetic appreciation of the great human panorama as it is unfolded before their eyes. The details are of unimpeachable veracity. A century hence the historian of manners will be able to reconstruct the entire visible life of the Spain of to-day—at least of Andalusia—from a reading of their pages. Here is no striving for effect, no sense of strain nor of effort; it is all palpably real. And yet the authors are not realists. The incidents in themselves have

no interest, nor have they as facts any potency or logic of their own. They never are studied. The appearance of reality only is of concern, the conveying of the impression of things as they are, of life as it is lived commonly hour by hour, bathed in sunshine, steeped in it, unthinkable without it, until the atmosphere, the background, the story, and the characters are fused into a picture whose truth we recognize at once and should as soon think of questioning as the noon of a summer's day.

This world is one of vivid color set down in pages which are shot through with light. It is a specific for good nature, and good nature is the traditional dower of Andalusia. Andalusia is all sunshine. Like Bécquer, the Quinteros are the poets of Seville—Seville of the torero, the guitar and the castanet, of bright burning daylight beating down upon the rows of shining white houses, a blaze of heat over it all; then in the evening the fragrance of orange blooms arises from the gardens and the thrum of merriment is heard in the streets through long and sleepless nights. By an amiable fiction everybody is happy in Seville. It is the city of sunshine and fiesta, of *alegría*, set in its *huerta* of spring flowers, best embodied perhaps in its annual *feria* at Easter, which

focusses in the lodge of the Quinteros, who are its favorite sons, in whose works it breathes incarnate, the very image of the tourist's ideal. Professors of happiness some one has called them. Their art is the growth of a warm country where the conditions of life are easy and men and women are easy-going and complaisant so long as they are assured of a place in the sun and the wherewithal which is necessary to bare subsistence.

With the Quinteros color is not an accessory; it is the spirit—the visible manifestation of an optimism inborn and incorrigible, careless while the sun shines. Life, as they see it, is a source of satisfaction. To prolong it is a pleasure and not a cause of pain. Springs of happiness abound at which we may pause to drink; the man who neglects to slake his thirst has only himself to blame—he is abnormal or else he is unwell. He cannot complain that the means of gratifying his desires were not to be found. The element of struggle is in consequence reduced to a minimum. There are no problems. The comedies are not comedies of ideas. The Quinteros propound no queries, they offer no solutions. Such things do not occur to their minds, or if they do, find no lodgment there—they are the pettinesses, the weaknesses,

the anxieties of our daily routine, in which we sap our strength or fret it away, while the great current of life sweeps evenly along. Tragedy and pain have no place in this philosophy. Even sorrow, when it appears, seems something negative, remote, unreal, a cloud which passes, a shadow which heightens the effect of the sunshine. It is like jealousy in romance, which only serves to make love sweeter. Gently poetic, it adds a sense of depth, opens a vein of sentiment without which we should enjoy no relief, humanizes the picture and sketches in the perspective with a haunting suggestion of the transitoriness and insubstantiality of life. There is a touch of Oriental fatalism in this attitude, if insouciance can properly be called fatalism—a legacy, perhaps, from the days of the Moors. The person is nothing, the plot is nothing. It is but a succession of links in the chain of existence, a thread which shimmers as it runs in the sun, without any other meaning than that of duration, a mode of things as they pass, of no importance and of no concern, as life, potent and invigorate, sweeps on into the beyond.

The Quinteros received their training and perfected their style in large measure in the theatres of the *género chico*, or lesser genre, in which perform-

ances of one-act plays and operettas, or *zarzuelas*, are given before different audiences at popular prices at various hours of the evening. The unity of plot characteristic of the short play, commonly the reproduction of popular customs or the exposition of a single theme, simplifies the problem to be solved. It becomes possible to adjust the plot to the subject matter without apparent weakness or artificiality. Lope de Rueda had carried the *paso* or brief sketch of this type to a point of satiric perfection as early as the middle of the sixteenth century. Even in the Spanish farce of the nineteenth, which was constructed after French models, the element of character and the depiction of manners played an important rôle, imparting a weight and air of veracity to the proceedings which distinguished them from the prevailing shop product of other countries. These qualities were also at the foundation of the world-wide reputation of José Echégaray, reinforced in his case by a certain authority and dignity proper to a mind accustomed to the conduct of large affairs. In an age of artificiality and generalization, there was in Spain always a strong admixture of what is called there actuality —the sense of being corporeally present at the very

moment, to which Spanish letters during the last quarter of the nineteenth century owe much of their distinction.

A style so subtle and so much a matter of deft treatment of detail as the new manner, was of course not possible in 1898, nor was it an attainment within the reach of the very young. In the beginning the Quinteros were no more than *saineteros—farceurs* in the popular genre—in whom the gift of observation and the color sense were exceptionally keen. They constructed their sketches carefully in accordance with orthodox standards. The plot still remained a dominant factor, sufficient to sustain the interest in itself, while color and incidents were skilfully blended with it, as though endowed with independent existence. Many of the more attractive shorter plays belong to the period of apprenticeship, when the ambient was still novel yet had fully developed its charm. *Mañana de sol* ("A Morning of Sunshine"), a dialogue between an old lady and an old gentleman seated upon a public bench in one of the *paseos* of Madrid, has been translated into several languages. The coincidence that the old people turn out to have been lovers marks it as an early example. The musical *sainete* entitled *El Mal de*

amores is a work of haunting fascination. Composed of the tritest elements in all that pertains to plot, it is animated by the breath of summer wafted across the Andalusian fields. A steady progress is discernible through the bewildering sequence of these plays until the incident and the atmosphere achieve a language of their own to the subordination of all other elements. Such delicate trifles as *Hablando se entiende la Gente* ("By Their Words Ye Shall Know Them") are perfect in their kind, faultless as transcriptions of life. A gentle humor plays over the scenes as though it were an emanation of the sunny atmosphere. It is indulgent, sportive, but not critical, at least in the active sense. It is too urbane ever to hint at the possibility of reform. The occasion does not matter; it is only natural to smile. And life is so beautiful! It diverts the mind for the moment and then lingers in the memory as an added grace.

More than twenty of the comedies have been translated into Italian, while several have been acted in the Venetian dialect. The peculiar provincial divisions of the Italian stage, with its insistence upon local types, prepared the way for a favorable reception, assuring the Quinteros a success second

only to that enjoyed in their own country. They are highly esteemed in Germany; translations of individual plays have also been made into French, Portuguese, and Dutch. The present volume is the first to be placed before English readers.

The study of an art which is of such accurate detail that it has passed without challenge in its own country as a faithful picture of the national life, cannot fail to be productive abroad of salutary results. The Spain of the foreigner does not exist. Even the French, who might be presumed to know better, see nothing when they look across the Pyrenees but fictions of the vintage of the opera Carmen. "Whenever anything is written about Spain in other European countries," says Francos Rodríguez, "recourse is had at once to picturesque lying, to the grievous impairment of our good name. Neither actors nor authors seem to think intelligence is required in order to convey an impression of Spanish life. All that is needed is to transform the men into bull-fighters and the women into *flamencas*, every woman without exception carrying a knife in her garter. But this is not Spain; the Spanish character bears absolutely no resemblance to the grotesque imaginings of these conscienceless artists who assume

to depict a nation by a display of braided frogs and castanets, of sugar-loaf hats and skirts which scarcely reach below the knees. Yet these things are universal whether in books or upon the stage.

"In the days when the elder Dumas roved over the land, liberties were natural which now would arouse laughter. Communication was difficult in that age, and authors who had a weakness for betraying truth were able to commit their infidelities without fear that the deception would be detected in short order.

"In these times, however, when Spain is taking an active part in the commerce of the world and her life may be studied freely in the thousand aspects of a complex civilization, further to persist in the scurrilous practise of considering us a people who jangle the tambourine, is a species of insult which it is incumbent upon us to resent. . . .

"We need only turn the pages of Sardou's "Sorceress" to learn the spirit in which this illustrious author approached his task. He enumerates the characters of the play and includes in the list one Cardenos (a name that means nothing), an executioner called Torillo (the *toro*, here come the bulls!), a Rioubos, which is about as Spanish as if the sky

were to rain cabbages, a person known as Afrida, whose status is no better, and a Doña Joana—enough to rend the stoutest heart.

"A Moorish woman appears who is dubbed Fatoum(?). Turning to Joana in full sixteenth century she exclaims: '*My dear, Señorita!*' '*Señorita!*'—as life-like, if you please, as any maid-servant of our own day politely addressing her mistress.

"The character Rufina, who arrives at Toledo direct from Aranjuez, belongs to the same epoch, just as if that royal palace had been in existence at the period in which the drama is laid. The fact is that Aranjuez had a Spanish sound in Sardou's ear; he laid hands on the name to give color to his play.

"Color, do we say? One of the master strokes of The "Sorceress" occurs in a scene in the third act, which is wonderful! Enrique solicits the love of Zoraya, and when the couple are in transports, the blows of a halberd are heard in the street. Whose halberd? Some soldier's? No, the night watchman's—the *sereno's!* Sardou hales our modest, kindly *sereno*, the vigilant guardian of our modern Spanish cities, back to the year 1507. . . .

"However, Sardou is by no means alone. As great a poet as Catulle Mendès has taken refuge

in his imagination, interspersing his *Vièrge' d'Avila* with grotesque details which give evidence of an ignorance which is unbelievable.

"In the play in question, two noblemen of Avila appear, by name Don Tomasso Farges and Don Hernández Ervann. One of the women is called Ximeira and another female character 'Una Pelleja'. . . .

"By splendid anticipation a sale of reserved seats for a bull-fight takes place in the reign of Philip II. . . . Bull-fights in the reign of the builder of the Escorial! What an invitation to mirth!

"If Spaniards would protest whenever possible against actors and authors who indulge in this species of falsehood, greater care would be exercised by those who make a business of misrepresenting our land as a place in which people wear hats with their brims turned up and clack castanets. Persons who have no other title to trade upon our good name than a proclivity for picturesque lying, had better write about their own country and forge whatever inventions their countrymen may find agreeable at its expense, in which case the sphere of their activities will be restricted indeed."

JOHN GARRETT UNDERHILL.

Let this mountain maid
Be remade again,
Like the bells remade.

—Popular Song

First presented by the *Compañía Guerrero-Mendoza*, at the *Teatro de la Princesa*, Madrid, on the sixth of April, 1912.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Malvaloca	María Guerrero
Juanela	Conchita Ruiz
Mariquita	Josefina Blanco
Sister Piedad	Carmen Jiménez
Teresona	María Cancio
Alfonsa	María Valentín
Doña Enriqueta	Elena Salvador
Dionisia	Aurora Le-Bret
Sister Consuelo	Luisa García
Sister Dolores	Consuelo León
Sister Carmen	Enriqueta Liquiñano
Leonardo	Fernando Díaz de Mendoza
Salvador	Emilio Thuillier
Martin the Blindman	Emilio Mesejo
Barrabas	Felipe Carsí
Tío Jeromo	Manuel Díaz
Lobito	Fernando Montenegro
A Workman	Salvador Covisa

MALVALOCA

Act I

ACT I

In Las Canteras, an Andalusian village, there is a convent of remote date, which is known by the name of "The Convent of Carmen." When the last of the nuns devoted to the Divine Love passed to a better life (she was a very old woman), the Sisters of Charity came to inhabit the ancient precincts. They are an order similar to that of the Sisters of the Poor.

At the time when the action of this play begins, there are in the convent, or home, six old people for whom the Sisters care with extreme solicitude and kindness.

The first act takes place in one of the corridors, or galleries, of the cloister through whose tall arches may be seen, upstage, the whole side of what was once a garden, now almost entirely converted into an orchard containing more trees than flower beds. At the right of the actor, the corridor ends at a wall in which there is a large door, called the

"Gateway of the Cross," because above it, fastened to the wall, there is a wooden cross. In the wall itself, as high as one can reach, and on a rough pedestal, there is a small image of St. Anthony. Before it there is an earthen jar full of chick peas. One of the central arches affords an entrance into the garden. In the corridor there are two or three chairs and a bench.

It is morning on a sunny day in April.

Enter BARRABAS, *one of the old inmates. He is rather small, ill-humored and fretful. He acts as caretaker of the convent garden and orchard, and fusses about in his own domains. Some distance upstage, in the shade of a tree,* SISTER CARMEN, *silent and preoccupied, sews tirelessly. From time to time the scenes which take place about her distract her from her work for an instant, but she soon fixes her attention again on whatever she is making.* SISTERS DOLORES *and* CONSUELO *enter the garden from the left. They carry large purses for the purpose of collecting alms. They enter the corridor through the middle archway, and disappear through the "Gateway of the Cross."* BARRABAS *soliloquizes maliciously as follows:*

BARRABAS. Here we go
Two in a row
Skulking in the shadows—
Sisters of Charity, you know.
He! he! My own verses!
Alms for the poor—
Pray give us more—
If it be silver, you add to our store.
Heigh!

[*Enter from the Gateway of the Cross,* MARTIN, *the blindman. He carries a stick to assist his progress. He is older and more broken down than* BARRABAS. *He walks quietly the whole length of the corridor.* BARRABAS *sees him and stops him to talk with him.*]

Good morning!

MARTIN. Good morning! I didn't know you were here, Señor Barrabas.

BARRABAS. You knew it perfectly well, Señor Martin.

MARTIN. Just as you say!

BARRABAS. Because, although you can't see me, you can smell.

MARTIN. Just as you say. Good morning.

BARRABAS. Are you going to take a sun bath?

MARTIN. Yes, with Sister Piedad's permission.

BARRABAS. There is nothing like dancing in attendance to get favors; but that doesn't suit me.

MARTIN. Nor me either. I won't argue with you. And, mind, you have no right to criticise things in this Home. You were taken in here out of charity the same as I was.

BARRABAS. There is a difference, my friend. I'm not a useless ornament like you are. I work here in the garden and the orchard. I earn the bread I eat; yes, and what you eat, too!

MARTIN. I don't owe you anything. I work, myself.

BARRABAS. Perhaps you'll tell me what you do? It's nearly two years since you have been up in the bell tower.

MARTIN. I do what the Sisters tell me to do.

BARRABAS. Since they never tell you to do anything, you live like a priest.

MARTIN. I tell you I don't want to argue with you. Good-bye.

BARRABAS. What have you to say of the clatter La Golondrina has been making lately? A fine bell she is!

MARTIN. Everything turns to poison in your mind, Señor Barrabas.

BARRABAS. That's why I like to get it out.

MARTIN [*starting toward him. With deep and genuine feeling*]. La Golondrina is a bell which belongs to this sacred Home; at present she is broken. She does not sound as she used to, because God has willed it so. But when these hands used to ring her, La Golondrina sang as no bell ever sang since belfries have had crosses. You know that as well as I do, only you want to hear me talk.

BARRABAS. Didn't La Sonora of the Iglesia Mayor have a better tone?

MARTIN. Now you're talking about La Sonora again! Everybody seems to be crazy in this town. To compare La Sonora with La Golondrina—why you'd have to be deaf to do that!

BARRABAS. Even nowadays, Señor Martin?

MARTIN. I'm not talking about nowadays. How would you expect her to sound after having been broken these three years? La Sonora's friends ought to be happy; yes, sir, very happy. They've lived for a long time oppressed by the weight of La Golondrina!

BARRABAS. I dare say the way it happened was

this: One afternoon, as the Eternal Father was walking along the clouds——

MARTIN. Better not meddle in sacred things, Señor.

BARRABAS. He heard you ringing the bell: Ding dong, ding dong! it sounded right in his ears, you know, and he said: "Well, well, that bell sounds too well to be in Las Canteras, which after all is only a village." Then he told an angel who was taking a trip through Andalusia, to break it with a blow of a hammer. He! he! Wasn't that something like the way it happened? God in Heaven was envious!

MARTIN. You're the one who is envious right here on earth. Idiot, fool, heretic! I'm going to ask the Mother Superior to forbid you to talk to me, that's all.

[*At this point* SISTER PIEDAD *appears in the doorway and cuts short the dispute. She is young and pretty, humble and gentle. She speaks quietly and open-heartedly. Her accent is not Andalusian.*]

SISTER PIEDAD. Quarreling again? You are beginning the day early.

MARTIN. This fellow does nothing but pick me to pieces.

BARRABAS. Me? I wouldn't do such dirty work!

SISTER PIEDAD. But you, too, Martin; why don't you go on about your business?

MARTIN. Because he won't let me!

SISTER PIEDAD. Why? Does he set a trap for you as though you were a bird?

MARTIN. He says things to me which make it impossible for me to let them go without answering.

SISTER PIEDAD. To foolish words there is always——

BARRABAS. Do you mean that my words are foolish?

SISTER PIEDAD. Precisely.

BARRABAS. Well, the only thing I did to him to-day was to wish him good morning. It's better to be a favorite than to be polite!

SISTER PIEDAD. No one has any claims for preference here, Barrabas. Nor do we try to cure wits. The king no longer pays fools. I know your antics by heart, and I also know what your dispute was about. It's the same every day.

MARTIN. Every day, Sister Piedad! Please tell the Mother Superior.

SISTER PIEDAD. Well, who knows but that God

will punish you, and make you very uncomfortable? I mean you, Barrabas. The miracle which I am hoping for is——

BARRABAS. But there are no miracles nowadays!

SISTER PIEDAD. Hush, Barrabas! How do we know? Go on with your work; and you, too, Martin.

MARTIN. God be with you, Sister.

[BARRABAS *goes into the garden at the right without replying.* MARTIN *disappears down the corridor.*

Enter LEONARDO *from the left of the garden. He is a man of about thirty years, and of a modest and simple appearance. His face is somewhat sunburned. His glance is penetrating and curious. He carries his hat in his hand, showing a head well covered with thick, abundant hair. His whole person has an appearance of strong, manly energy which makes him very likable.*

SISTER PIEDAD *sees him coming, and awaits him, smiling sweetly.*]

SISTER PIEDAD. Good morning, Señor.

LEONARDO. Good morning, Sister.

SISTER PIEDAD. You have come to see your friend, have you not?

LEONARDO. To stay with him awhile. I have nothing important to do down below in the town for the moment.

SISTER PIEDAD. He was here only half an hour ago. He is probably inside talking with some of the inmates. He has such a pleasant way with them, and he loves to chat.

LEONARDO. With them, and with everybody. He has a word for every one he meets. He doesn't know how to keep still. Really what he says is fascinating and his words are like honey. He has begun talking of you now, and of this place, most interminably.

SISTER PIEDAD [*playfully*]. Indeed? Well, I warn you, we are very much interested in him. It is just possible that we may ask him to show his gratitude in some way.

LEONARDO. If there is anything *I* can do. . . . I don't know about *him*.

SISTER PIEDAD. We three will talk it over together. I'm going in to look for him. Perhaps he is with Don Jacinto.

LEONARDO. The priest?

SISTER PIEDAD. No, Señor; one of the inmates who is also called Don Jacinto. Haven't you no-

ticed a very handsome, elderly gentleman, who is almost always alone?

LEONARDO. Oh, yes! Now I know whom you mean.

SISTER PIEDAD. He comes of an important family in Seville, who have come here to die. None of us can ever tell what our end will be. Of course we care for them all with great love and kindness—and we have to add courtesy in his case. Everything humiliates and distresses him so. He has found a great comrade in your friend.

LEONARDO. What a sad story! Do these things happen frequently?

SISTER PIEDAD. Yes, Señor, in the larger Homes. But we mostly have people from poor families. Now and then we have an inmate who saves something from whatever we give him to eat in order to give it to his relatives when they come to visit him.

LEONARDO. Very interesting.

SISTER PIEDAD. I shall let your friend know that you are here.

LEONARDO. No; let *me* go, Sister.

SISTER PIEDAD. No, indeed! Pray be seated. He'll be with you in a moment.

[*She goes out through the garden to the right.*

LEONARDO *walks about for a moment in silence. Soon he notices the figure of St. Anthony.* BARRABAS, *who has again entered, watches his chance to talk with the newcomer.*]

LEONARDO. What foolishness! The Saint has peas to-day. It was oil and vinegar yesterday. I can't understand it.

BARRABAS. Are you looking into San Antonio's jar?

LEONARDO. Eh? Oh, yes!

BARRABAS. Don't you know what it is all about?

LEONARDO. No. And ever since I came here, I have been wondering about it, but I never felt like asking anybody.

BARRABAS. Well, then, I'll tell you what it is, and you won't have to ask me. He! he!

LEONARDO. Good!

BARRABAS. Well, since this Home lives by charity, whenever the Sister who is in charge of the supplies notices that they need anything, she puts a little of whatever they need in San Antonio's jar. Along comes some charitable person, takes a peep at the Saint's jar, notices the peas, or whatever it happens to be, and knows right away what

is needed. Then he or she orders a sack or a bottle. Then the Sisters say that San Antonio gets it.

LEONARDO. Ah!

BARRABAS. And San Antonio has no more to do with the peas, or the oil, than you or me!

LEONARDO. Of course not.

BARRABAS. That's the way miracles happen nowadays. I could tell you a lot more——

LEONARDO. No, I don't wish to hear any more.

BARRABAS. Why, in this Home——

LEONARDO. That will do—that will do, thank you.

BARRABAS. I don't believe you——

[LEONARDO *sits down and begins to smoke.* BARRABAS *approaches him with a smile.*] Would you give me a cigarette, Señor?

LEONARDO [*good-naturedly*]. Yes . . . yes, indeed. Take two of them if you wish.

BARRABAS. I do wish, and thanks very much. Tobacco is the only thing which recalls other days to us here. And it is the only thing that San Antonio never sends for! He's not much of a smoker. We have to be satisfied with the thin cigarettes which the Sisters provide for us! [LEONARDO *smiles.*] That's the first time I ever saw you smile in my life. I don't suppose you have stomach trouble?

LEONARDO. No.

BARRABAS. You and Don Salvador are very different.

LEONARDO. That will do . . . that will do; no more, thank you.

BARRABAS. I don't believe you. [*He turns toward the garden re-rolling the cigarette which he is about to smoke. Soon he exclaims as he glances to the left.*] Who is this little dove coming? We don't often see a sight like that in this place!

[MALVALOCA *enters. She stops an instant in the middle of the garden and looks about her as if uncertain which way to go. Upon catching sight of* LEONARDO *in the corridor, she goes toward him.*

MALVALOCA *is pretty; her face is smiling and communicative; her body active and graceful. She is clearly of the proletariat. Her black hair is short and curly. It seems blown about by the breeze with every nervous movement of her head, which is full of all sorts of fanciful nonsense. These quick movements of her head are birdlike. She wears a smooth, plain-colored dress, a white waist, black buckled shoes, and a small shawl*

of black silk thrown across her shoulders. Her eardrops, rings, and bracelets are very costly, and in striking contrast with the simplicity of her dress.

When LEONARDO *sees her coming, he gets up, somewhat startled.* BARRABAS *draws near* SISTER CARMEN *as though to comment upon the visitor. A moment later he moves off.*]

MALVALOCA. Good morning.

LEONARDO. Good morning.

MALVALOCA. Is this the Home kept by the Sisters of Charity?

LEONARDO. It is.

MALVALOCA. Thanks. I saw the gate open so I walked in; but when I got into the garden I was afraid I was in the wrong place.

LEONARDO. Well, this is the Home.

MALVALOCA. Oh, yes! I see a nun over there. And—could you tell me——?

LEONARDO. What?

MALVALOCA. Is it here they are taking care of a man who was hurt?

LEONARDO. Yes.

MALVALOCA. You know the man I mean?

LEONARDO. Is it Salvador García?

MALVALOCA. Yes, of course, Salvador García. How is he?

LEONARDO. Almost well now.

MALVALOCA. He is? But was he dangerously ill?

LEONARDO. I wouldn't say dangerously so, but he suffered enough. His burns were horrible, and the treatment was heroic.

MALVALOCA. It got about in Seville that he burned himself in a furnace.

LEONARDO. Great heavens!

MALVALOCA. Gossip—just talk, wasn't it? Some one told me about it. Who was it? Oh! that pug-nosed Matilda! She never could bear him.

LEONARDO. Have you just come from Seville?

MALVALOCA. Just this minute. All I did was to fix up a bit and look for the Home. I came to get at the truth, so as not to leave any doubt in my mind. I wanted to see him.

LEONARDO. You must be a great friend of his.

MALVALOCA. Uh!

[*This "Uh" of* MALVALOCA'S *is a sort of a little trill. She always uses it with an exaggerated inflection and a humorous gesture, when*

she is not sure of expressing in words what she wishes to say. Her imagination puts a world of meaning into each "Uh."]

LEONARDO. A very great friend, eh?

MALVALOCA. I'm still his friend. I have been a tiny bit more than that, but that's a thing of the past, now.

LEONARDO. Except the friendship, of course.

MALVALOCA. Are you Salvador's friend, too?

LEONARDO. Something more than a friend.

MALVALOCA. How's that?

LEONARDO. We are partners in the foundry business.

MALVALOCA. What foundry?

LEONARDO. The brass foundry in which the accident occurred. Didn't you hear about it?

MALVALOCA. It's been more than two years since I've seen him; but now I'm thinking. . . . Who was it told me that Salvador was mixed up with kettles and things?

LEONARDO [*smiling*]. Probably the information came from the same source as the other.

MALVALOCA. No, it wasn't the Pug-nose. But what difference does it make who it was? So you and Salvador are——?

LEONARDO. Partners.

MALVALOCA. Both of you?

LEONARDO. Naturally.

MALVALOCA. Since when?

LEONARDO. Since not very long ago. Although our friendship is very recent, we are already very intimate.

MALVALOCA. Salvador is very attractive.

LEONARDO. Very.

MALVALOCA. He kind of fascinates people, don't you think?

LEONARDO. He has fascinated me at any rate.

MALVALOCA. He does that to every one he meets. Sympathy is what counts in this world.

LEONARDO. Do you think so?

MALVALOCA. I'm sure of it. Real love is nothing more than sympathy, a sympathy so great—so big—that you don't know how to live without the person who gives it to you.

LEONARDO. Perhaps.

MALVALOCA. Call it what you will: love, friendship, affection, take your choice. Look at it closely and you have—sympathy. Don't you suppose that thieves love each other more than fools do? Why is it? Because thieves are always more

fascinating—more sympathetic. Why—now don't you be afraid of me!

LEONARDO. Well, you may be right.

MALVALOCA. How did you happen to fall in with this rascal?

LEONARDO. You just gave the reason: sympathy, fellow feeling. We were traveling together; we happened on this abandoned foundry in the village; and we decided to try our luck. We both liked the same things. The foundry used to be called "Successors to—somebody or other," but Salvador has christened it with the high-sounding name of "La Niña de Bronce."

MALVALOCA. Ah! "La Niña de Bronce!" I know why.

LEONARDO. Did he name it after you?

MALVALOCA. No, Señor; after another woman—the hussy! But where is he? I want to see him.

LEONARDO. I expect him here now.

MALVALOCA. You expect him here?

LEONARDO. Yes. One of the Sisters has gone in to tell him of my arrival.

MALVALOCA. I feel like giving him a good hug, poor boy. He's a great rascal, you know, but at the same time, he's very much of a gentleman. He's

always behaved very well toward me. I never knocked once at his door without his answering. I'm sure I shall never die in a hospital while he's alive. Is that San Antonio? He has a face like a musician. What's he peddling—peas? Tell me, were you in the foundry when the accident happened?

LEONARDO. Certainly.

MALVALOCA. How did it happen? How did it happen? Would you mind telling me?

LEONARDO. Not in the least. We were going to cast a figure for a new fountain in Los Alcázares, a neighboring village——

MALVALOCA. I know the place. It never rains there. Phew!

LEONARDO. The mould for the figure which we were going to cast was already covered up in the ground. Then we were about to pour the molten bronze from the crucibles into a hole which was left in the surface.

MALVALOCA. From the what?

LEONARDO. From the crucibles. Crucibles are great jars which are capable of resisting the highest temperatures without cracking or breaking. In these, when they are put into the furnaces, the hardest bronze is converted into a liquid fire.

MALVALOCA. So you could stick your finger into it!

LEONARDO. Then, as I was telling you, it passes from the furnace into the ground where the mould of whatever we are casting is buried. It was in this step that the accident happened to Salvador.

MALVALOCA. Yes?

LEONARDO. Yes. We were carrying the crucible from the furnace with what we call "hand carriers." If the crucible is a large one, it sometimes takes from four to six men to carry it, and to make the casting. Salvador was one of these men. Very well; when they came to pour the liquid through the spout into the mould, one of the men slipped. This caused some of the liquid to be spilled, and it spattered on Salvador's breast and arm and leg.

MALVALOCA. Phew!

LEONARDO. If he had given way to the pain, and had let all of the liquid fire spill and scatter, it might have burned some man to death. Salvador made a heroic effort and shouted: "Cast!" The others obeyed him and poured the moulten stuff into the ground. When there wasn't a drop in the crucible, he dropped the handle and fell into my arms in a dead faint.

MALVALOCA. Poor fellow!

LEONARDO. Two Sisters from this Home had stopped at the shops to ask for alms. They were overcome and greatly affected by the scene, and insisted that we carry him here, it being but a step from the foundry. So here we brought him, here he stayed, and here he will remain.

MALVALOCA. Well, he certainly must have had a hard time of it. He's not very tough. Pinch him ever so little, and it will hurt him. Why do you suppose he isn't here yet?

LEONARDO. I don't know. It surely is late. Perhaps the doctor has come.

MALVALOCA. Is he a good doctor? A good veterinary is the best they have in most of these villages.

LEONARDO. He must be a good one. He's brought Salvador out of it in a hurry. I'll go see what the trouble is, and tell him that you are here.

MALVALOCA. If you would be so kind.

LEONARDO. It's a very great pleasure. [*He starts to go, but turns back.*] Who shall I say is waiting for him? I don't know your——

MALVALOCA. To be sure! Tell him—tell him that Malvaloca is here.

LEONARDO. Malvaloca?

MALVALOCA. Does that name sound queer to you?

LEONARDO. No. But it surprises me.

MALVALOCA. That's what I have always been called since I was thirteen. My name is Rosa, at your service.

LEONARDO. Thanks very much.

MALVALOCA. But you say "Malvaloca" to Salvador. Would you like to know why they call me Malvaloca?

LEONARDO. Why do they?

MALVALOCA. I was born in Malaga in a little house which had a flower box in the doorway. There was a little flower in the box called malvaloca. And people knew the house by the malvaloca. So far, so good; but the malvaloca died. Since everybody knew my house as the house where the malvaloca grew, and since the flower was no longer there, why, *I* became the Malvaloca! So, instead of there being a flower on the doorstep, there was a little girl, inside. You see how simple it all is. Only it has to be explained, that's all.

LEONARDO [*in a peculiarly impressed frame of mind which partly confirms the theory of sympathy espoused*

by the engaging MALVALOCA]. I'm going to tell Salvador you are here.

[*Goes out through the garden, to the right.*

MALVALOCA [*when alone*]. That man is attractive, too. [*Looking toward the door.*] Who is this little old woman coming? She must be one of the inmates. But how small she is! Why, it doesn't seem possible! She looks like a little wax figure.

[*Enter* MARIQUITA, *proceeding in the opposite direction down the corridor.* MALVALOCA *watches her as though enthralled. She is an old woman almost small enough to fit into San Antonio's jar of peas.*]

MARIQUITA [*as she passes in front of* MALVALOCA]. God keep you, sister.

MALVALOCA. God be with you, little sister.

MARIQUITA. May you always keep well.

MALVALOCA. Are you one of the inmates of the Home?

MARIQUITA [*stops*]. Yes, Señorita.

MALVALOCA. Have you been here long?

MARIQUITA. Four years. Ever since I lost my son who was killed by the Moors.

MALVALOCA. Your son was killed in the wars?

MARIQUITA. The only one I had.

MALVALOCA. What a shame! [MARIQUITA *makes a gesture of grief and resignation.*] Are there many of you old people in the Home?

MARIQUITA. Six, at present. Two women and four men.

MALVALOCA. This was a convent once, wasn't it?

MARIQUITA. Yes, Señorita, the Convent of Carmen. When the last nun died, the Sisters of Charity came here to live.

MALVALOCA. Ah! Tell me, little sister, do they receive alms?

MARIQUITA. It's this way: they live by charity, and we live by their charity.

MALVALOCA. Here, take this. [*She takes a silver dollar from her purse and gives it to her.*]

MARIQUITA [*astonished*]. What's this?

MALVALOCA. A dollar.

MARIQUITA. But I can't change it for you.

MALVALOCA. It is for you, little sister.

MARIQUITA. For me?

MALVALOCA [*banteringly*]. To buy a new hat with!

MARIQUITA [*smiling through her tears*]. A hat—for me!

MALVALOCA. Or whatever else you may need.

MARIQUITA. A petticoat!

MALVALOCA. As you like, sister.

MARIQUITA. Are you rich?

MALVALOCA. Huh!

MARIQUITA. They don't give such big gifts in the streets. Two Sisters leave here every day to ask for alms, and you should see how little they pick up! And listen to this: last Saturday a man even struck Sister Piedad!

MALVALOCA. Who did it?

MARIQUITA. A drunken man—how do I know who he was? She went into a house whose door was open, thinking that it was a private house; but it was a tavern. But as she is very strong-minded in a quiet way, she never stopped at all, just went ahead and begged for alms for the poor. And that old drunken brute began to talk filth to her, and then struck her.

MALVALOCA. What did the Sister do then?

MARIQUITA. Well, as she started to go, the Sister said to him: "Very well, that was for me. Now give me something for the poor."

MALVALOCA [*struck with admiration*]. Ah!

MARIQUITA. When the Innkeeper heard her, he threw the drunken man into the street, and gave her

a fine gift. The next day, when he was sober, the fellow came and begged her forgiveness. You should have heard Sister Piedad! She knows a lot about those things.

MALVALOCA. Is that she who is sewing over there?

MARIQUITA. No, Señorita. Sister Piedad is a beautiful little woman. She married very young, her husband died, and then she came here; because she said she didn't have any one to love in the world. If she comes out here, I'll point her out to you.

[*At this moment, in the corridor, and from the left,* DON SALVADOR, LEONARDO'S *partner, enters. He is a man of about the same age as* LEONARDO, *and of a very intelligent and wideawake appearance. His left hand rests in a silk handkerchief which is knotted about his neck. When he sees* MALVALOCA, *he is very much surprised and delighted.*]

SALVADOR. Can I believe my eyes?

MALVALOCA. My poor little boy!

SALVADOR. Malvaloca! You here? What does this mean?

MALVALOCA. It means that I have come to see you.

SALVADOR. God bless you, little girl. God bless you.

MALVALOCA. How are your burns?

SALVADOR. All well.

MALVALOCA. That's better. I've brought you good luck.

SALVADOR. You always do. Sit down a while.

MALVALOCA. No, I can't.

MARIQUITA. Are you in love with him?

SALVADOR. She was, but she left me for another.

MALVALOCA [*to* MARIQUITA]. Tell him he lies.

SALVADOR [*to* MARIQUITA]. Do you like her?

MARIQUITA. She is beautiful. And look! [*Shows him the money.*]

SALVADOR. Good heavens!

MARIQUITA [*laughing*]. She says it is for a hat! God bless her.

MALVALOCA. Good-bye.

[MARIQUITA *goes on her way dreaming of the petticoat which she is to buy.*]

SALVADOR [*to* MALVALOCA, *with a satisfied air*]. Well, how about it?

MALVALOCA. Man, but I'm glad to see you!

SALVADOR. And I to see you.

MALVALOCA. To think that at your age, you'd be in a Home for the Aged!

SALVADOR. Time flies. On the other hand, you never grow old. You're as pretty as ever.

MALVALOCA. It's your eyes, and because I just cleaned up a quarter of an hour ago. They've already told me how you acted the day of the accident. How brave you were!

SALVADOR. Who told you all that?

MALVALOCA. Your friend.

SALVADOR. What friend?

MALVALOCA. Your partner.

SALVADOR. Is he here?

MALVALOCA. Well! He went to look for you, and a Sister went in before him. Where have you been?

SALVADOR. In the tower. Have you been talking to Leonardo much?

MALVALOCA. To whom?

SALVADOR. To my partner, Leonardo.

MALVALOCA. Oh, so that's his name? Well, from the way Leonardo looks at you, you would think he was going to take your picture. He's a man of rare importance, isn't he?

SALVADOR. Yes, indeed. And what is more, he is a splendid fellow.

MALVALOCA. How does he come to be a friend of yours, then?

SALVADOR. The meeting of two extremes.

MALVALOCA. Extremes?

SALVADOR. Yes, Leonardo has the trait which I should most like to have—determination. He is very unusual. He does whatever he pleases. You have to know how to get along with him, however. Well, to show you the kind of a man he is: he could have lived quietly and pleasantly at home with his father, who also had a foundry. But his father, who was a widower, wished to marry again. Leonardo gave him to understand that neither he nor his sister wanted another mother. So he spent that night at home, but left early the next morning. He found a place for his sister with an aunt and uncle of his who had no children, and then he went out into the world to seek his fortune.

MALVALOCA. Well, that shows that he is a man with some feeling.

SALVADOR. He is. He's as strong and unbending as bronze.

MALVALOCA. Does his sister live with him now?

SALVADOR. No, she is still with her aunt and

uncle. But she is coming to visit Leonardo soon, for a few days.

MALVALOCA. He isn't an Andalusian, is he?

SALVADOR. No. He came from Asturias.

MALVALOCA. How do you suppose he ever happened to be born so far away?

SALVADOR. How do I know? But, little girl, I'm glad you came.

MALVALOCA. Will you be sensible? Wouldn't you have done the same? You know how I am. A friend of mine asked me if I had heard about your having been toasted like—like San Lorenzo, and I just packed up and came! You know me—sometimes I think there is nothing but heart in my head.

SALVADOR. In your head?

MALVALOCA. Yes, don't you think so?

SALVADOR. Why, yes, naturally; you haven't much else there!

MALVALOCA. That's why I never have headaches.

SALVADOR. What have you where your heart should be?

MALVALOCA. Oh, something with a fence around it, and a dog to keep people out!

SALVADOR. Why, I heard that a German——

MALVALOCA. Come, you know I never take beer in the summer.

SALVADOR. Are you still living in Seville?

MALVALOCA. Yes, just at present.

SALVADOR. And your mother?

MALVALOCA. Is in Sestona.

SALVADOR [*laughing*]. Sestona!

MALVALOCA. Don't laugh. It's either Sestona, or Fitero, or Vichy. She's always the same. If I have money, it's "My darling child, my own flesh and blood, joy of my old age"—all that kind of nonsense. But, if I'm poor, she snatches two or three of my shawls, pawns them, and takes the train for some kind of fashionable Baths. I never saw a woman who could drink so much of so many kinds of water. [SALVADOR *laughs outright.*] Why, she is just puffed up with it!

SALVADOR. And your father?

MALVALOCA. He's a different sort. He doesn't drink water; he drinks by the barrel! Oh—I don't like to talk of my family. Heavens! If they had turned me out as ugly as I am pretty, I'd be for throwing them into one of your crucibles.

SALVADOR. You're just your old self.

MALVALOCA. Oh! let's drop them, poor things. How about your father, is he in the village?

SALVADOR.. Yes, still there.

MALVALOCA. Busy with his photography?

SALVADOR. And with a little shop where he sells frames, which have been on his hands for about a year now. He manages to keep himself alive. I think I shall pay him a visit when I get well, so as to convince him that my burns really amounted to nothing.

MALVALOCA. But they must have amounted to something?

SALVADOR. A part of the life.

MALVALOCA. I know. How did you happen to turn out such a rogue?

SALVADOR. A rogue?

MALVALOCA. Foundryman. It's the same.

SALVADOR. You remember I always had a taste for that sort of thing. I met the fellow; we seemed to take to each other at once; and nothing more was necessary. He has many illusions—I haven't quite so many; but I'm glad he has them. So that's the way I came to have a foundry in case you have need of one. Is there anything I can do for you?

MALVALOCA. You might make me two dragons.

SALVADOR. Two dragons?

MALVALOCA. Yes. One for a father, and one for a mother!

[*They laugh.*]

SALVADOR. That's the very first thing I'll do when I get back to the shops.

MALVALOCA. Do you expect to be here long, now?

SALVADOR. No, not much longer.

MALVALOCA. Well, then, listen: If I come again, don't tell any one who I am.

SALVADOR. Why not? A friend of mine——

MALVALOCA. Oh! Suit yourself!

SALVADOR. Well, if I don't tell—who shall I say you are?

MALVALOCA. The best thing to say is that I am English; that will account for anything. Here comes your partner.

[*At this moment* LEONARDO *and* SISTER PIEDAD *enter from within.*]

LEONARDO. Here he is, Sister!

SISTER PIEDAD. So we have found you at last?

SALVADOR. Here I am.

MALVALOCA. Good morning.

SISTER PIEDAD. Good morning. [*To* SALVADOR.] We have been looking for you all over the house.

SALVADOR. I just climbed up into the bell tower.

MALVALOCA. Sister, with your permission——

SISTER PIEDAD. I'm at your service.

MALVALOCA. Would you mind telling me where the chapel is?

SISTER PIEDAD. I'll show it to you, myself.

MALVALOCA. Oh, no! don't bother.

SISTER PIEDAD. It's no bother, I assure you.

MALVALOCA. Are you Sister Piedad?

SISTER PIEDAD. And happy to serve you. Shall we go?

MALVALOCA. Yes. [*To* SALVADOR.] I'll be back soon.

SALVADOR. Don't you forget to come back, Sister Piedad.

SISTER PIEDAD. I?

SALVADOR. To talk over that little matter before Leonardo goes.

SISTER PIEDAD. Oh, yes! I'll be right back. [*To* MALVALOCA.] This way, please.

LEONARDO. Who is this woman?

SALVADOR. Sister Piedad? Why, haven't you heard——

LEONARDO. Stop your joking. I mean the other.

SALVADOR. Oh, the other is spice—essence of cinnamon!

LEONARDO. Yes, yes.

SALVADOR. They call her Malvaloca.

LEONARDO. I know that.

SALVADOR. Then what do you want to know?

LEONARDO. Something more than her name. Tell me everything you know about her that I do not.

SALVADOR. Her history would make a rather long story. Imagine for yourself. She is like no one else in the world, and yet she is like a great many—a pretty face, a not very wise head, and she comes from a house where they are very poor. That is the beginning of the story. I know a bit more in detail of some of the chapters.

LEONARDO. Has she been an affair of yours?

SALVADOR. Yes; some time ago, however.

LEONARDO. Well, she still feels grateful to you.

SALVADOR. Because I did the right thing by her.

LEONARDO. Yes?

SALVADOR. Yes. I took her to a small restaurant in Córdoba for luncheon, asked her to wait a moment while I went for tobacco, and then, after two years, I went back to see if she was there!

LEONARDO. You did that?

SALVADOR. To see if she was still faithful.

LEONARDO. Bah! You never did it.

SALVADOR. Yes, I did really. That was the only way out of it. [*He is silent a moment while* SISTER DOLORES *passes down the corridor from right to left.*] Malvaloca is the sort of a woman who gets to one's heart. We were growing to be more and more fond of each other. She even burst into tears two or three times—and this having a woman cry over me is not what I like. Tears make a chain which is stronger than any we make in the shops.

LEONARDO. I don't understand why you left her if you cared so much for her. And I understand much less how she can endure now to see your face.

SALVADOR. I'll tell you. Time went on—and things happened to us—and when the little girl died, I was the first to be at her side.

LEONARDO. Ah! So she lost a child?

SALVADOR. A little girl as pretty as a picture. She was four years old. That was the saddest thing that ever happened to Malvaloca. The little girl was a balm for all her troubles.

LEONARDO. What a pity!

SALVADOR. She has a great many troubles, too. Yet she is better than most women I've met.

LEONARDO. That's the way she seemed to me. She looks good. Deep down in those eyes of hers, the first light you see is Goodness.

SALVADOR. Do you know——

LEONARDO. What?

SALVADOR. Nothing; I had a bad thought.

LEONARDO. But what are you laughing at?

SALVADOR. At you, probably.

LEONARDO. But why at me?

SALVADOR. Well—"The first light you see is Goodness!" I see, and yet I don't see—foundryman!

LEONARDO. Don't be a fool. [*Suddenly changing the subject.*] What does Sister Piedad want with us?

SALVADOR. She will tell us herself soon, my friend. We've got some work for "La Niña de Bronce."

LEONARDO. That's good. I'm glad of it.

SISTER PIEDAD *enters at this moment.*

SISTER PIEDAD. Here I am.

SALVADOR. All right. Now let's talk about La Golondrina.

LEONARDO. La Golondrina?

SISTER PIEDAD. That's what the people call

her, though her real name is Santa Teresa. She is the convent bell, and is broken.

LEONARDO. I should say she was broken. Couldn't be anything else. Every morning and afternoon I hear her from the foundry, and it sets my nerves on edge. It sounds like the devil!

SISTER PIEDAD. The devil?

LEONARDO. I beg your pardon, Sister. I mean she couldn't sound worse.

SISTER PIEDAD. How would you expect her to sound after having been broken for four years?

LEONARDO. Well, she must be mended. I wish everything in the world could be fixed as easily.

SALVADOR. Do you hear, Sister? Didn't I tell you Leonardo was our man?

LEONARDO. Yes, indeed. A broken bell in a building like this, two steps from a foundry, is a disgrace to the foundrymen.

SALVADOR. Without even taking into consideration the fact that some way or other we must pay the Sisters for the care they have taken of me.

SISTER PIEDAD. Don't talk nonsense, brother. We only did what God willed us to do. But if you succeed in making Santa Teresa—La Golondrina—sing as she used to do through your skill,

lifting her voice to Heaven, then, from the Mother Superior down to the humblest nun (who is your servant), we will have neither words nor deeds good enough to repay you.

LEONARDO. Well, you can count upon its being done. Have you seen the bell, Salvador?

SALVADOR. Yes. It is cracked from top to bottom.

LEONARDO. That is not strange, if she had such a beautiful tone as you say.

SISTER PIEDAD. Why is that?

LEONARDO. The louder and sweeter-toned bells are, the more fragile they are. The one we like to hear best is that which is broken most easily.

SALVADOR. They are like women in that respect.

SISTER PIEDAD. Hush, man, hush! You are always thinking of women.

SALVADOR. Bells have tongues, and that's what makes me think of them.

SISTER PIEDAD. Very well, but do stop joking.

LEONARDO. In spite of the jest, Sister Piedad—and this chap has the vice of joking when he is most serious—we are going to recast La Golondrina in "La Niña de Bronce," and she will be as good then as she ever was.

SISTER PIEDAD. God will repay you for it. That

is precisely what I wanted to know; if she will be what she used to be—if after she is repaired she will be the same.

LEONARDO. The very same. Made of the same material, cast from the same bronze.

SISTER PIEDAD. Very good. If she will be as you say—very good. She is hallowed by traditions, by many memories which are dear.

LEONARDO. Well, you shall see she will be the same as before. La Golondrina will take flight, leave her tower, enter our shops, will stay a few days with us, the fire will consume her in order to give her new life, and then she will return to her nest, singing better than she ever did.

SALVADOR. Or, to use another metaphor, La Golondrina is a dark little girl who is hoarse. She consults a couple of doctors, and upon her returning home after her visit, she answers with a voice which makes even the birds pause to listen.

SISTER PIEDAD. Didn't I tell you? His mind is always on the same thing. [*To* MARTIN, *who re-enters.*] Martin, did you hear?

MARTIN. What, Sister?

SISTER PIEDAD. The miracle I told you about is going to happen.

MARTIN. What miracle?

SISTER PIEDAD. The miracle of La Golondrina, who, thanks be to God for putting such good and intelligent men in the world, is going to ring as she used to.

MARTIN [*trembling with joy*]. Sister! Is it possible?

SISTER PIEDAD. It is indeed. Don Leonardo and his friend are going to take her to the foundry and are going to return her to us as good as new. Aren't you?

LEONARDO. We are.

MARTIN. Show me where those gentlemen are. I want to kiss their hands.

SISTER PIEDAD. What you ought to do is to give thanks to the Lord!

MARTIN. And kiss their hands!

LEONARDO. Are you the bellman?

MARTIN. I am, Señor, and at your service. Don't you see how I am trembling?

SALVADOR. Martin loves La Golondrina as though she belonged to him.

MARTIN. As though she were my very own, Señor.

SISTER PIEDAD. He pulled the rope the first time she was rung in this tower.

MARTIN. I am the man! I was young then. Since that time we have never been separated. She has been my child, my sweetheart, my playmate—even my mother—all in one. I've always told her all my secrets.

LEONARDO. Well, then. I'm all the more happy at what we are going to do.

MARTIN. No one can tell what it means to me, Señor. I suppose you gentlemen never heard La Golondrina before her accident?

LEONARDO. I never did.

SALVADOR. Nor I.

SISTER PIEDAD. But I did.

MARTIN. Just as the Sister says: it seemed like a voice from Heaven. She awakened the village by her call. She made the fields happy when day came. She called Christian people to prayer, and she wept for the dead. When my wife died, I tolled La Golondrina for her funeral, and I had no better consolation than her voice. How sad she did sound!

SISTER PIEDAD. Don't excite yourself too much, Martin. You will feel worse for it later on.

SALVADOR. Let him talk.

MARTIN. After the news you have given me, I shan't be able to control myself for days. You see

I'm getting old. Well, since La Golondrina was broken, I haven't kept count of my years. She never grew old, and I lived as though she were my heart. Sister——

SISTER PIEDAD. What is it, Brother?

MARTIN. May I tell Barrabas the news?

SISTER PIEDAD. Nothing more than just tell it to him?

MARTIN. That's all—that's all. He won't want to argue either, now. You'll see!

SISTER PIEDAD. Very well, then. But be careful what you say.

MARTIN. Don't you worry, Sister. Gentlemen, if my prayers reach Heaven, you will never want for anything in this world. I will give what life there remains in me to La Golondrina after I've rung her once more as I did before she was broken.

SISTER PIEDAD. You may leave us now, brother.

SALVADOR. Good-bye, Martin.

LEONARDO. Good-bye.

MARTIN [*going toward the right in the orchard in search of his implacable enemy*]. Barrabas! Señor Barrabas! I have some news for you, friend!

SALVADOR. Poor old man! [*To* LEONARDO, *who is drying his eyes.*] What's this—are you crying, too?

LEONARDO. Pish!

SALVADOR. But, man alive!

LEONARDO. Foolishness!

SISTER PIEDAD. He will tell the news to Barrabas and to the whole place. Good old Martin will go crazy with joy.

LEONARDO. Why does he want to tell it to Barrabas?

SISTER PIEDAD. Because Barrabas was baptized in another church, and belongs to another faction. In Las Canteras nothing arouses more antagonism than a dispute about bells. Some side with La Golondrina, and some with La Sonora, and the day when no heads are broken over it is one of God's miracles.

LEONARDO. It all seems rather amusing.

[SISTER CONSUELO *enters through the Gateway of the Cross. She carries a small flask of wine in her hand.*]

SISTER CONSUELO. The doctor is here, Don Salvador.

SALVADOR. Has he come?

SISTER CONSUELO. Yes, he is in your room. He says that he is in a great hurry.

SALVADOR. I shall be with him immediately.

[SISTER CONSUELO *removes the pan of peas from the statue of San Antonio, and sets down the flask of wine. She goes out by the same way she came in.*]

LEONARDO. Well, good-bye. I'm going now.

[MALVALOCA *reënters from the left of the corridor.* SALVADOR *does not see her as he starts to leave at that moment.*]

MALVALOCA. Are you going?

SALVADOR. Ah, Malvaloca! Yes, the doctor is here, and I am going up to him. Will you wait?

MALVALOCA. No, I'll come back this afternoon.

SALVADOR. That's better. I'll see you later, then.

MALVALOCA. Good-bye.

SALVADOR. I'll be expecting you. I'm awfully glad you came to see me.

MALVALOCA. And I, to see you're out of danger. Good-bye.

SALVADOR. Good-bye.

[*He goes in through the Gateway of the Cross.* SISTER DOLORES *also appears at the left, seeming a bit perturbed. She speaks to* SISTER PIEDAD *aside and shows a jewel to her. Meanwhile,* LEONARDO *and* MALVALOCA *are saying good-bye.*]

MALVALOCA. I'm very happy to have met you.

LEONARDO. More than I am to have met you?

MALVALOCA. Just the same, probably.

LEONARDO. It can't be. Remember there is some difference between you and me.

MALVALOCA. Caramba! Our Andalusian ways are going to your head.

LEONARDO. But they're rather difficult to acquire.

MALVALOCA. Nothing is difficult. We shall see, however. I suppose you will be coming here again to see your friend?

LEONARDO. Of course!

MALVALOCA. Well, then, we'll see each other.

LEONARDO. Indeed we shall.

SISTER PIEDAD [*approaching* MALVALOCA]. Sister!

MALVALOCA. What is it?

SISTER PIEDAD. I wonder, was it you—it must have been—was it you who left this jewel on the altar before the Virgin?

MALVALOCA. Yes. I left it for the poor.

[SISTER DOLORES *goes to tell* SISTER CARMEN *about the matter.* LEONARDO *follows the incident with interest and emotion.*]

SISTER PIEDAD. For the poor?

MALVALOCA. Yes.

SISTER PIEDAD [*very much overcome*]. But sister, a gift in this form, and of this value——

MALVALOCA. Do you mean? . . . Is it because it comes from me?

SISTER PIEDAD. Oh, no! sister, I don't know who you are. I only know that you came here to see a sick friend, that you went to pray to the Virgin, and that you left this jewel on her altar for the poor. Why should I disapprove of anything that comes from your hands? Besides, wherever the jewel comes from, my dear sister, it brings with it a radiance that outshines the hand that gives it.

MALVALOCA [*in a sudden burst of feeling at hearing her, and with that natural intimacy and charming simplicity with which she does everything*]. Well, then, if you can't see the hand that gives it, take this, too! [*She takes the gold chain from her neck and gives it to her.*]

SISTER PIEDAD. Sister!

MALVALOCA. It's for the poor.

SISTER PIEDAD. But——

MALVALOCA. That's the only way I know how to be good! For the poor! [*She looks at both their faces and smiles.*] Well, I'll see you later.

[*Exit hurriedly into the garden.*

SISTER PIEDAD. Who is this girl?

LEONARDO. I have only just met her myself, Sister. Good-bye until this afternoon.

SISTER PIEDAD. God be with you.

LEONARDO. Good-bye, Sister.

[MALVALOCA, *who, as she came in, stopped like a dove orienting herself in the garden, again pauses, and at last goes out firmly to the left —upstage.* LEONARDO *follows her, although with an effort at concealment, as if his manly spirit were enmeshed in the fine fringe of the woman's shawl.*

SISTER PIEDAD *is much moved. With tears in her eyes she stands looking at the jewels as she repeats* MALVALOCA'S *words.*]

SISTER PIEDAD. That's the only way she knows how to be good!

[*Upstage,* SISTER DOLORES *talks it over with* SISTER CARMEN, *who, in deference to the extraordinary interest of the scene, suspends for a moment her constant and quiet work.*]

End of Act One

ACT II

ACT II

A large, irregular, well-lighted court between LEONARDO'S *house and the workshops of "La Niña de Bronce." To the left of the actor is the entrance of the house. To the right, that of the foundry. Upstage is a wall through which is a small gateway leading into a yard which gives access to the street. Before the house doorway is a covered porch with dark green roof tiles and white pillars. These rest upon huge bases of brick, also white. In the shelter afforded by this porch is* LEONARDO'S *worktable. Several flower boxes with geraniums and roses adorn the place. In a corner to the right there is a heaped-up pile of old material from the foundry. It is morning in the month of May.*

Enter SALVADOR *from the shops with a roll of papers in his hand. He wears a long blouse and a cap. He goes to* LEONARDO'S *table, puts the rolls of paper upon it, and examines various documents with interest.* TERESONA *enters through the gate-*

way from the yard. Once caretaker of the shops, she is now LEONARDO'S *servant. She comes from the market-place carrying a huge basket on her arm, full of the day's provisions. She stops to address* SALVADOR *before entering the house.*

TERESONA. Good morning, Señor, and welcome.

SALVADOR. Hello, Teresona.

TERESONA. I was sleeping like a top but I knew when you arrived last night, and that you came to see the master.

SALVADOR. Yes. . . . I asked for you when I arrived.

TERESONA. Don Leonardo's sister also came yesterday, but in the morning.

SALVADOR. I saw her last night.

TERESONA. How pretty she is, and what a sweet face she has! But how was your father?

SALVADOR. As well and strong as ever.

TERESONA. May God keep him many years for you. I suppose you heard all the news of what happened during the month you were away?

SALVADOR. I'm finding out little by little.

TERESONA. Don Salvador, there are times when the best of us get into a little difficulty, but who-

ever gets mixed up in a fight is lost. I look on and keep still. It's the old women in the village who do the gossiping, and they can do it, too. [*She shows him some coral earrings which she wears.*] Look, Señor, he gave me these, so I keep mum. Is there anything you wish?

SALVADOR. No, you may go now.

TERESONA. Good-bye, Señor.

[*Exit into the house.*

SALVADOR. Bah! I knew it must happen to him.

[*He continues to examine papers and books. From this occupation he is distracted by the unlooked-for appearance of* TIO JEROMO *who enters through the gateway. He is* MALVALOCA'S *uncle, but one would not suspect it from his looks. He is about fifty years of age. He wears his cap wherever he goes, and carries a small basket containing his lunch. He walks toward the shops.*]

TIO JEROMO [*pleasantly surprised at seeing* SALVADOR]. Salvador! Is it you? Back already?

SALVADOR [*very much astonished*]. Eh?

TIO JEROMO. I never would have known you in that blouse. Did you have a good trip?

SALVADOR. But I can't believe my eyes! You here? How does that happen?

TIO JEROMO. Oh! Hasn't your partner told you anything about it? Why, I've been working in the foundry for a week now.

SALVADOR. You?

TIO JEROMO. Me! I heard of my niece's affair with your partner and took advantage of it. You know how Malvaloca has always provided for the family.

SALVADOR. Well, yes!

TIO JEROMO. Does it look good to you, Salvador?

SALVADOR. Yes, very good!

TIO JEROMO. Now that you are here, just see if I don't know a thing or two!

SALVADOR. Possibly.

TIO JEROMO [*patting him familiarly on the back*]. You're a smart one!

SALVADOR. What do you mean by this familiarity? When were you and I ever on such intimate terms?

TIO JEROMO [*disconcerted. Half in jest, and half seriously*]. Excuse me, Don Salvador.

SALVADOR. That's better. But keep your hat in your hand—so.

TIO JEROMO. I thought we would be as we used to——

SALVADOR. That is all a thing of the past. Get to work now. What are you working on?

TIO JEROMO. Anything that turns up. Odd jobs.

SALVADOR. Very likely. And have you permission to get here later than the others?

TIO JEROMO. I have my niece to take care of. What more do you want? I had an awful night last night, Salvador. God keep you from anything like it, God keep you! Excuse me, I didn't mean to be so familiar. It was just habit. I have a poor liver.

SALVADOR. Well, you can cure it . . . in there!

TIO JEROMO. Here I go. I'm glad to see you looking so well, Don Salvador.

SALVADOR. Thanks.

TIO JEROMO. Excuse me if I have done wrong.

SALVADOR. That's all right.

TIO JEROMO. If there's any one I want to please here, it's you, Don Salvador.

SALVADOR. In with you, man!

TIO JEROMO [*much moved*]. Don Salvador, please don't act like that toward me.

SALVADOR. In with you! In with you! You're more afraid of work than you are of an earthquake! All this talk is merely to keep yourself from doing anything.

TIO JEROMO [*changing his tone and laughing*]. You make me laugh with your goings on. Good-bye.

[*Exit, laughing, into the shops. Deep down in his heart, however, there is a doubt as to the security of his position*].

SALVADOR. Well, I never thought things would advance so rapidly. Now that we have the lobster we'll have to clip his claws. We shall see, we shall see. [*Crosses to the door of the shops and calls.*] Lobito! Lobito!

[LOBITO *enters after a little. He is a very young workman, wideawake and talkative. He is in his shirtsleeves, wears a cap, very old trousers, and "alpargatas" (canvas shoes with rope soles). A coarse and dirty apron is tied by a cord at his waist. In his hand he carries a large file.*]

LOBITO. Did you call Señor?

SALVADOR. Come here. Drop your file, and let's smoke a cigarette.

LOBITO. Thank you very much, Señor. I haven't

felt the warmth of one in my hand for some time. You got back last night, didn't you?

SALVADOR. Yes. Last night.

LOBITO. And we recast La Golondrina to-day!

SALVADOR. To-day. I've already seen the material in the crucibles, and Don Leonardo has told me that the mould is in splendid condition.

LOBITO. Yes, Señor. It was made very carefully. We've even come to blows in the shops about La Golondrina. There are two parties of us. . . .

SALVADOR. To which do you belong?

LOBITO. I stand up for La Golondrina. I'm what they call a "Volandero." But Manuel Martínez and Bartolo and the hunch-back, with three or four others, are "Swells." They are for the bell of the Iglesia Mayor.

SALVADOR. Do you know what party the new workman belongs to, and where he comes from?

LOBITO. Him? Why the Utrera prison has the honor!

SALVADOR. The prison?

LOBITO. You forced me to tell you.

SALVADOR. Does he work hard?

LOBITO. Work? He? Why, he's too good to

carry a basket across the shop! The apprentices call him Don Jeromo.

SALVADOR [*laughing*]. Then he must have come strongly recommended.

LOBITO. Are you joking? From the way he spoke of you when you were away, I thought it was you who did the recommending.

SALVADOR. So the shameless fellow speaks well of me?

LOBITO. He never stops! Never mentions your name without praising you to the skies.

SALVADOR. Well, well! How badly Don Jeromo is going to be repaid!

LOBITO. Don't get mixed up in this thing, Señor.

SALVADOR. Why not?

LOBITO. Why not? Why, because he is her uncle, and came here through her, and that is all that need be said.

SALVADOR. Through her? And who is *her ?*

LOBITO. That's a good one! This is a day for jokes.

SALVADOR. Is it Malvaloca?

LOBITO. Of course! Don't be foolish, Señor.

SALVADOR. No wonder, but I didn't know a thing about it. Tell me—has this woman remained in Las Canteras?

LOBITO. In Las Canteras and in Don Leonardo's mind! She surely never is out of that. She lives in one of Sra. Resolana's new houses. So far so good; when Don Leonardo is not there with her, she is here with him. They can't leave each other.

SALVADOR. Does Malvaloca come here?

LOBITO. She comes nearly every day. She came into the shops from the very first. How we used to laugh at her. She would keep you amused for a week. But it's pretty well known that they told her that she diverted us from work, for now she doesn't come in much. It's too bad, for aside from her good looks, she's more generous than most people I have seen.

SALVADOR. She has a hole in her hand. I know her.

LOBITO. A hole? It's a regular sieve!

SALVADOR. So Leonardo is——

LOBITO. He's gone! When he comes from over there, it's no use asking him anything. He won't pay any attention to you. He only talks and laughs to himself as if he were still with her. And when he is waiting for her here, and she happens to be a little late—it's well to get out of his way. Leonardo may be a gentleman and well educated

but he can be rougher and harsher than a wire brush.

SALVADOR. He's going wrong, Lobito; things are going wrong with him.

LOBITO [*insinuatingly*]. She's worth it, isn't she Señor?

SALVADOR. Yes, yes. But one has to know how to manage her. And my friend takes this life too much to heart.

LOBITO. Pichichi, the office boy, told me that the woman is a book that you know by heart.

SALVADOR. Well, you tell Pichichi from me to close his little mouth!

LOBITO. Here comes Don Leonardo.

SALVADOR. I see where I shall have to heap coals of fire on his head.

[*Enter* LEONARDO *through the gateway which opens on the yard. He comes from the street.*]

LEONARDO. Hello, traveler!

SALVADOR. Hello!

LEONARDO. Did you have a good sleep?

SALVADOR. Yes, and even better than that.

LOBITO. Do you wish anything more, Señor?

SALVADOR. No, you may go on with your work.

LOBITO. I'm going to see about the wheel.

[*Exit into the shop.*

SALVADOR. Where is your sister?

LEONARDO [*pointing to the house*]. She is here. I left early this morning without seeing her. I often get up early these days.

SALVADOR. You do, eh?

LEONARDO. Yes, I like to see the sun rise from behind the castle. Have you never seen it?

SALVADOR [*mischievously*]. The sun rise from behind the castle? Yes, indeed, sir, before you ever did.

LEONARDO. What?

[*Enter a workman from the shops.*]

WORKMAN. Don Salvador, the modeller wishes to ask you a question.

SALVADOR. I'll be there in a minute.

LEONARDO. What is it he wants?

SALVADOR. Nothing much. I told him to give a little more spirit to the model of that grating.

LEONARDO. Oh!

[*Exit the workman into the yard. He reappears in a moment and goes into the shops carrying a cross bar.* JUANELA *enters from the house;* SALVADOR *stops a moment to greet her. She*

justifies the reflection which TERESONA *has already made.*]

SALVADOR. Good morning.

JUANELA. Good morning. Hello, Leonardo! I saw you from my balcony as you came in.

LEONARDO. Ah, you did?

JUANELA. You surely are an early riser. How early you go out!

SALVADOR [*artfully*]. Night comes on so quickly in these small places! Eh, Leonardo?

LEONARDO [*startled*]. Yes . . . of course.

SALVADOR. I'll see you later.

JUANELA. Good-bye.

SALVADOR. If this chap speaks ill of me, don't believe him.

[*Exit into the shop.*

JUANELA. Rest assured! Your friend seems to be a great joker. [LEONARDO *is very much preoccupied.* JUANELA *watches him for some moments in silence.*] What are you thinking about?

LEONARDO. Eh?

JUANELA. What are you thinking about? Are you here, or somewhere else?

LEONARDO. I am here, only I was a bit absent-minded. What do you want?

JUANELA. Nothing. Only try to realize you are here, and that I am, too!

LEONARDO. Very well, I'll try.

JUANELA. I'm going out now to take a walk about the town with Teresona. May I?

LEONARDO. Yes. With Teresona, yes. Teresona is a fine woman. She was the caretaker of this house before we took it, and I have kept her in my service.

JUANELA. She seems to think a lot of you.

LEONARDO. Yes.

JUANELA. What *is* the matter with you, Leonardo? Something is wrong. I noticed it last night.

LEONARDO. No, there isn't, silly! What could be the matter? The trouble is you have forgotten my ways because you haven't lived with me for a long time. Run along and take your walk with Teresona. You will like the place, I'm sure.

JUANELA. I loved the part I saw yesterday. How bright it is! And the houses are so white that they hurt one's eyes when the sun strikes them. Do you remember how we used to dream of this Andalusian country away off there on our farm? I used to think of it as a land that I should never see—a story land.

LEONARDO [*absently*]. And here you are in it.

JUANELA. I am, yes. But I insist that you are at least in Asturias!

LEONARDO. No, little one, no.

JUANELA. Come! I'm not so simple as all that. Is what they tell me about you true?

LEONARDO [*quickly*]. What did they tell you?

JUANELA. It's true!

LEONARDO. What is?

JUANELA. That you have a sweetheart!

LEONARDO. A sweetheart? Who told you that?

JUANELA. A neighbor who saw me waiting for you yesterday on the balcony; she started a conversation with me. The people in this place are very confidential. Whatever comes into their heads pops out again. They think aloud. Don't you agree with me?

LEONARDO. There is something in what you say. It all comes from an exaggerated gift of imagination. They are often mistaken in what they say here.

JUANELA. And are they mistaken this time?

LEONARDO [*after gazing at her*]. Would you feel badly if they were not?

JUANELA. On the contrary, I want you to marry, so you will stop roaming about the world, and so I can come to live with you.

LEONARDO. Aren't you happy with Aunt and Uncle?

JUANELA. Yes. They take very good care of me. But that is different. It isn't my own home, as yours would be—as father's used to be.

LEONARDO [*with a sigh*]. I know. Last night you told me that you went to see him before coming here.

JUANELA. I did. Instead of cheering me up, the visit saddened me. He isn't happy.

LEONARDO. He couldn't be.

JUANELA. What a shame that it should always be a woman who destroys the home!

[*The two are silent. Enter* TERESONA, *wearing a different shawl.*]

TERESONA. Shall we go, child?

JUANELA. Ah, Teresona! Yes, let's go.

TERESONA. Very well, come along; I can't leave the kitchen for long.

JUANELA. Come on.

TERESONA. I'm going to take you to the Iglesia Mayor first. Then to the mill so you can see the fields from the tower.

LEONARDO. Good.

JUANELA. I'll see you afterward, brother.

LEONARDO. Good-bye.

TERESONA [*mischievously to* LEONARDO *as* JUANELA *enters the house. She refers to her shawl*]. It is yours. Do you recognize it?

LEONARDO. Hush!

TERESONA. Don't be afraid. I never let my tongue get me into trouble. Good-bye.

[*Exit after* JUANELA.

LEONARDO [*reproaching himself bitterly*]. Bah! Always a coward. What is it? What is the matter with me? I hardly recognize myself.

[SALVADOR *enters from the shops in time to see and hear him.*]

SALVADOR. It seems to me that it is a little soon to begin talking to yourself.

LEONARDO. What?

SALVADOR. It is only a step from that to throwing stones about the streets in a pet.

LEONARDO. You are always in such good humor!

SALVADOR. And aren't you? Aren't you good-humored to-day?

LEONARDO. I scarcely ever am. You know that. And not at all to-day, especially since a moment ago.

SALVADOR. Well, then, what is the matter?

LEONARDO. Oh, something.

SALVADOR. Something to do with her. Am I right?

LEONARDO. Eh?

SALVADOR. Love is apt to be nonsensical like that; at best it will come on to rain when the sun is shining. But the shower soon passes away.

LEONARDO. What do you imagine my trouble is?

SALVADOR. It's not a case of imagination. I know that the little beast which you think you have inside of you is being tamed to the music of a skirt which is none too worthy.

LEONARDO. What a queer way you have of putting things! Where did you learn all this?

SALVADOR. From you yourself.

LEONARDO. From me?

SALVADOR. From you.

LEONARDO. Since when?

SALVADOR. Since the day when Malvaloca came to Las Canteras. In your first conversation with her you fell like a raw recruit. Come, deny it.

LEONARDO. If you call it falling.

SALVADOR. You see? I only had to hear you first, and then, afterward, to see you with her. After that you didn't come to the Home to see me,

but to meet Malvaloca. And since I know you, and also know her, I had a feeling inside that you wouldn't last as long as tin does in fire.

LEONARDO. That's the way it was. I confess it to you, you are a loyal friend. I have never seen a woman who has captivated and interested me so much.

SALVADOR. Yes, yes. She carries with her a bloom of conviviality.

LEONARDO. Conviviality isn't adequate to describe the attraction she exercises. She hasn't a word or a movement that doesn't get one deeper in love. She fascinates me. I don't know whether or not it is the contrast between her position and mine, but she fascinates me.

SALVADOR. She has wit.

LEONARDO. Something more than wit. There is light in her lips, in her face, in her hands, in her hair——

SALVADOR. That may be brilliantine.

LEONARDO. Can it be that you make a joke of it?

SALVADOR. Don't you see I can?

LEONARDO. Is what I am saying so ridiculous?

SALVADOR. Nonsense! My joke was merely

caused by envy at seeing you so much in love. I'd like to fall in love like that, only I never get the chance, or hardly ever.

LEONARDO. Never. But no matter. Perhaps you live more peacefully for it. More happily, I won't say. Malvaloca has come into my heart and awakened feelings that were dormant or new there. Would you believe that even to suffer when I am with her is a great joy to me? I suffer and weep, just as I laugh and enjoy myself. I live—live—and to live for a woman is something.

SALVADOR [*somewhat gravely*]. But, man——

LEONARDO. I swear to you by our friendship, that Malvaloca not only fascinates me by the witchery of her person, the passion of her eyes, the grace of her carriage, her words——

SALVADOR. What else?

LEONARDO. All of them put together; more than all, if such a thing is possible. It is the innate goodness of her heart; her mad generosity; the deep sadness of her misfortune of which her tears tell me more than her words, the unlooked-for tears which come into her eyes even in her happiest moments—all this seduces me, moves me, and makes me tremble. Do you understand?

SALVADOR. Yes, of course I understand. I also understand that these things hold you fast.

LEONARDO. What do you say?

SALVADOR. But it will pass over. This fire will soon die out.

LEONARDO [*as though asking himself*]. Will it pass over?

SALVADOR. Of course it will! You're fascinated now, I know. I know, too, about the affair in La Resolana's house, the number of times you go there, how enchanted you are to see the sun rise from behind the castle——

LEONARDO [*laughing*]. What a rascal you are!

SALVADOR. How she visits the foundry——

LEONARDO. No!

SALVADOR. Yes!

LEONARDO. She has been here only a few times. I swear it.

SALVADOR. No, sir! She comes every day. A few times, indeed!

LEONARDO. I always have to laugh when I am with you. She's due here for a little visit soon!

SALVADOR. What? She's coming here soon?

LEONARDO. Yes. She hasn't been here to-day.

SALVADOR. Is she coming soon, Leonardo?

LEONARDO. Well, why are you surprised?

SALVADOR. You're crazier than I thought you were!

LEONARDO. Eh?

SALVADOR. What about your sister?

LEONARDO [*disturbed*]. My sister—that's right—you think it is wrong while my sister is here——

SALVADOR. Of course.

LEONARDO. Well, I'm not so crazy as you think. The very same idea occurred to me before it did to you. I went to tell her not to come yesterday, but it wasn't necessary, for she anticipated me by saying that she wasn't going out.

SALVADOR. And to-day?

LEONARDO. I went the same as yesterday.

SALVADOR. And didn't you tell her to-day, either?

LEONARDO. No.

SALVADOR. Why not?

LEONARDO. Because—well, because it is a thing that is repugnant to my feelings, and I couldn't say it.

SALVADOR. You do wrong, Leonardo.

LEONARDO. Well, then, I shall do wrong, but I shall comply with the dictates of my conscience. I

cannot tell a good woman—one who wishes to be honorable—to stop coming to my house. That is like attempting to prevent her from being good.

SALVADOR. But, let's see. Don't get excited. Does Malvaloca know that your sister is here?

LEONARDO. I think not.

SALVADOR. Well, without your attempting to prevent her, as soon as she finds your sister is here, she won't come.

LEONARDO. She won't?

SALVADOR. She knows her ground, and has more common sense than you have.

LEONARDO. She must understand resignation then.

SALVADOR. Put it any way you wish. You are not the only one responsible for Malvaloca's life.

LEONARDO. What egotism is this, Salvador?

SALVADOR. The egotism of living on earth and not on the moon!

LEONARDO. The egotism of—— But it is best not to talk about this particular thing. We could talk until we were tired and you would probably never learn to understand me. There are some things which never enter the intelligence without first passing through the heart.

SALVADOR. As you like. What shall we talk about? I know very well that when a man is in your heated condition, he will only pay attention to himself.

[*Enter* TIO JEROMO *from the shops. He goes toward the yard gate. He still wears his working clothes, after the fashion of* LOBITO, *and carries a small mallet hung from his belt, a saw in his left hand, and a chisel in his right. He greets* LEONARDO *as he passes.*]

TIO JEROMO. Good morning, Don Leonardo.

LEONARDO. Good morning, Jeromo.

TIO JEROMO. Congratulations on Don Salvador's return.

LEONARDO. Thanks.

TIO JEROMO. We're working hard. [*Exit.*

SALVADOR. We can at least talk about this invaluable workman here. Why didn't you write me something about this acquisition?

LEONARDO. I beg your pardon. It was forgetfulness or carelessness. It wasn't important, and I didn't think it was necessary.

SALVADOR. And it wasn't. The necessary and important thing to do, is to turn him into the street.

LEONARDO. Malvaloca's uncle?

SALVADOR. Correct—Don Jeromo.

LEONARDO. He has attended to his duty so far.

SALVADOR. He? Why, he's never done a stroke of work in his life! Moreover, he is a consummate rascal with bad blood in his veins. He's a danger to the business. I've already noticed a pack of cards in the shops, and the wine bottle won't be long in coming.

LEONARDO. Do you think he brought the cards?

SALVADOR. I'm sure of it. He's taken good money from four unfortunates already. What is more, the tools and shovels which are missing were carried off by him.

LEONARDO. Oh, no, that can't be true! We must try to reform him.

SALVADOR. What we ought to do is to pay him with a good kick and throw him into the street. For if you are kind to him and let him stay, besides the trouble he is giving, you are going to have the whole tribe, his family and their friends to bother you. Malvaloca's small brother, her mother, her father, her godfather and her godmother, her aunt and her uncle—oh, I know them!

LEONARDO. This must be stopped.

SALVADOR. I'm afraid it won't be.

LEONARDO. Yes, it shall. After all, he is only a workman who may cause trouble, and whom we can discharge this very day. Or do you think I am so weak that for a satisfaction foreign to our interests I could overlook something that may be a disadvantage to us and demoralizing to our business? Well, if you do, you are mistaken. We'll discharge the man to-day.

SALVADOR. That's not quite necessary.

LEONARDO. Indeed it is, Salvador. [*He sees* TIO JEROMO *approaching. He comes from the yard; the tools in the same position as before.*] To-day is too late. We'll do it this very minute.

SALVADOR. You are certainly in a hurry about it!

LEONARDO. I'm always in a hurry to do my duty. Listen, Jeromo. We were just talking about you.

TIO JEROMO. About me?

LEONARDO. Yes.

TIO JEROMO. Good or bad?

SALVADOR. Don Leonardo spoke well of you, but I very much to the contrary.

TIO JEROMO. Oh, ho! [LEONARDO *goes to his table and turns over the leaves of the day book.* TIO JEROMO *scents trouble, and starts to flatter in order to disarm his enemy.*] Good! I'm like the boys in

the shops who belong to this parish: I'm thinking about the casting of La Golondrina. What an event, Don Salvador, what an event to write about in the History of Spain!

LEONARDO. You are right.

TIO JEROMO. What is he talking about?

SALVADOR. He's forecasting another event which is about to take place this minute.

LEONARDO. From this moment you may consider yourself discharged from the foundry.

[TIO JEROMO'S *gesture of stupefaction at hearing* LEONARDO *say these words is indescribable. He looks silently from one to the other, and at last breaks out in these words.*]

TIO JEROMO. Do you know I have no words——

LEONARDO. You don't need any. I have said all that is necessary.

TIO JEROMO. I couldn't be deader if a thunderbolt had struck at my feet! Somebody has been lying about me. [*Arrogantly.*] What lies have they made up?

LEONARDO. All explanation is superfluous.

TIO JEROMO. Don Leonardo, it would be so with a cricket, and yet you listen to him—and he costs only ten cents.

SALVADOR. And you're not worth even ten cents!

LEONARDO. You may go.

TIO JEROMO. That's it. Kick an honest workman into the street like a dog! Then they talk about strikes.

SALVADOR. You struck the day you were born.

TIO JEROMO [*pathetically*]. Salvador, Salvador, I didn't expect this from you.

LEONARDO. What do you mean?

TIO JEROMO. See if she isn't sorry.

LEONARDO [*troubled*]. Eh?

TIO JEROMO. Don Leonardo, at least for her sake, for she loves me more than she does her own father!

LEONARDO. Silence! It's useless to persist.

SALVADOR. Do we owe him anything?

LEONARDO. On the contrary. Two days ago I anticipated five days' pay for him. But we are even now.

TIO JEROMO. No, we're not. I certainly thank you very much. [*Behind his hand.*] Curse that woman! [*To* SALVADOR *in a burst of anger.*] You've seen the time when this wouldn't have happened!

SALVADOR. You'd better keep quiet.

TIO JEROMO. You loved her more than he does.

LEONARDO [*violently grasping a hammer which lies on his desk*]. Get out of my sight this minute, or I'll knock your head in!

TIO JEROMO. Very well, sir, very well. I'm on my way. [*Starts to drop the tools ill humoredly in a corner.*]

LEONARDO. Was that what you wanted done?

SALVADOR. You can see for yourself.

LEONARDO. Well, it's done.

[*Exit into his house.*

TIO JEROMO. There, from what I've heard, it was you who got this man to leave me breadless.

SALVADOR. Leave the place!

TIO JEROMO. Well, hunger is an evil master.

SALVADOR. Leave, I tell you!

TIO JEROMO. You'll hear from me again—you and that *panoli!* And Malvaloca! That little girl won't be long in hearing about it.

SALVADOR. Into the street with you!

TIO JEROMO. I still have a mallet in my hand.

SALVADOR. You've got to have more than that. You've got to have the courage to use it. What an empty boast! [TIO JEROMO *throws the mallet angrily to the ground. He gnaws his fist and goes angrily into the shops.*]

TIO JEROMO. Damn that girl!

SALVADOR. At last we're rid of him. The scene was inevitable. [*Calling:*] Lobito! Lobito! Sooner or later it was bound to come. [*To* LOBITO, *who appears at the shop door.*] Listen, Lobito, don't take your eye off Tío Jeromo until he leaves.

LOBITO. I understand, Señor.

SALVADOR. He's capable of any nonsense.

LOBITO. We've had a good laugh in there. We heard the whole fight.

SALVADOR. Come, come! Go in and watch him.

LOBITO. Never you fear, Señor. [*Exit.*

SALVADOR [*going to the house*]. We'll calm the partner a bit.

[*At this instant* MALVALOCA *appears at the yard gate. She wears a shawl, dressing simply, very modest earrings being her only jewelry.*]

MALVALOCA. Who goes there?

SALVADOR. Eh? Malvaloca!

MALVALOCA. Hello, my man! You here? When did you come?

SALVADOR. Last night.

MALVALOCA. After you left home, you went to Malaga to see your lady friends, didn't you?

SALVADOR. Right you are.

MALVALOCA. Did you bring me any raisins?

SALVADOR. To refresh your memory?

MALVALOCA. To put in brandy!

SALVADOR. I didn't know that you were here.

MALVALOCA. Carambo!

SALVADOR. I thought you were in Seville.

MALVALOCA. And I thought you were in Rome, kissing the Pope's slipper!

SALVADOR. Well, I left Las Canteras, and have returned.

MALVALOCA. Well, I haven't returned, nor have I gone, nor am I going.

SALVADOR. You like the village so much, then?

MALVALOCA. I've settled down.

SALVADOR. With a view of the fields or of the river?

MALVALOCA. With a view of the clock on the Town Hall.

SALVADOR. Times have changed, little girl.

MALVALOCA. Always for the better. Where's our friend? Has he hidden himself?

SALVADOR. You'll find him upstairs working at figures for you.

MALVALOCA. And he is in earnest. I do the same for him.

SALVADOR. Leave your figures.

MALVALOCA. I'll leave nothing. I'd rather leave the sunlight.

SALVADOR. We're as far along as that, are we?

MALVALOCA. Uh! You don't know anything about it. We are a pair of lovers such as you see in pictures.

SALVADOR. Like those in Teruel?

MALVALOCA. It's deadly cold in Teruel.

SALVADOR. Is the fever so high, then?

MALVALOCA. Ninety-eight and a fraction. Where did you say he was?

SALVADOR. He is probably with his sister.

MALVALOCA [*surprised*]. Has his sister come?

SALVADOR. She came yesterday.

MALVALOCA. Then I'm off. Don't you think that I ought to go?

SALVADOR. I do indeed.

MALVALOCA. So do I. Whatever you call it, a spade is a spade. Why didn't Leonardo tell me?

SALVADOR. Because Leonardo thought it better not.

MALVALOCA. Don't joke. He is more romantic than you are, more romantic. Uh! He sees and then embroiders everything he sees with stars.

SALVADOR. Romantic things seem to agree with you. You are much prettier than you were, and you have a beautiful color.

MALVALOCA. The quiet life I lead, my son; it works wonders.

SALVADOR. Those earrings aren't like the ones you wore in my time.

MALVALOCA. Nor in anybody else's time. They were an idea of his. He's even got me to let him give me my hairpins. Even that! And I have had to say good-bye to all my jewelry for a while.

SALVADOR. How about my watch?

MALVALOCA. He's given the hands a bad cramp. Why, if I even mention your name he turns green! You cause him more trouble than any one else.

SALVADOR [*with a gesture and accent of disgust*]. Enough!

MALVALOCA. He's mad about me.

SALVADOR. So I see.

MALVALOCA. As no one in the world ever was before.

SALVADOR. You don't mean me?

MALVALOCA. Be sensible! Can you compare raw canvas to silk? He loves me more than anybody else does, and in a different way.

SALVADOR. Differently than I did?

MALVALOCA. Yes, differently than you.

SALVADOR. And what is the difference?

MALVALOCA. Why, even in the way he takes my hand! The way he breathes when he sees me! He treats me as if I were somebody—not just a mere woman. Let's see if I can explain what I mean. Supposing you had been the first man who had made love to me when I was a girl—good as you are—I would have been what I am to-day. But if *he* had been the first, I should have been different altogether. Then I shouldn't have had to run away because his sister was here. Do you understand?

SALVADOR. Yes.

MALVALOCA. And do I exaggerate?

SALVADOR. No.

MALVALOCA. Don't be hurt, Salvador. I have very much to be thankful to you for, but that has nothing to do with this new kind of love which Malvaloca had never a taste of till now. You are good because you aren't bad. He is good because he is good. To make it clear to you: you are good in the morning, and he is good all day. That is something like what I mean.

SALVADOR. He *is* good.

MALVALOCA. Better than a stage priest. You know that when I dream I always see him with white hair and a staff, marrying everybody!

SALVADOR. Ha! Ha!

MALVALOCA. And so I am going away without seeing him, since I don't want his sister to find me here.

SALVADOR. Shall I tell him you came around?

MALVALOCA. Yes, tell him. No, don't tell him!

SALVADOR. Just as you say.

MALVALOCA. Yes, you can tell him. Why must we be so secret about it? Good-bye.

SALVADOR. Wait a minute, and we'll have a good laugh.

MALVALOCA. Over what?

SALVADOR. Don Jeromo. We've had to put him into the street.

MALVALOCA. That's natural. I'm glad of it; don't you think I'm not. They've told me of two or three of his doings in the shops, and I've been sorry that I ever asked Leonardo to take him on. Dear me, what a family ours is!

[TIO JEROMO *enters from the shops. He starts toward the inhospitable street, peevish and*

morose. He is dressed as he was when we first saw him.]

TIO JEROMO. Into the street—to die if I must on some doorstep—but with my head in the clouds!

SALVADOR. God be with you!

MALVALOCA. Good luck!

[TIO JEROMO *looks at them disdainfully, and goes out through the gate.* MALVALOCA *and* SALVADOR *laugh outright.*]

SALVADOR. What a rascal!

MALVALOCA. What pleases me is the way he went off!

[*They keep on laughing.* LEONARDO, *as he reënters, surprises them at it. His manner leaves no doubt that he is displeased.*]

LEONARDO. Hello!

MALVALOCA. We were just laughing at Tío Jeromo, who went out into the street with a face like a villain.

LEONARDO [*apologetically*]. There was no other way but to discharge him.

MALVALOCA. And I'm the first one to be glad of it. But look out; he's got a revengeful disposition. He is very bad, and is capable of thinking up anything.

LEONARDO. I don't know what he can "think up."

MALVALOCA. Now don't you go and knock his brains out on the strength of what I'm saying. I only wanted to warn you. *Isn't* he revengeful, Salvador?

SALVADOR. Yes, but who pays any attention to him? I must go in to see if we are ready to cast soon. [*Exit into the shops.*

MALVALOCA. What's the matter with you, Leonardo?

LEONARDO. Nothing.

MALVALOCA. Don't say "nothing" that way. Why, the circles under your eyes reach down to your neck! I have been studying you like astronomers study the clouds. When dogs eat grass, it's a sign of rain. I come; and as you don't greet me with a smile, I know we're going to have a storm.

LEONARDO. No.

MALVALOCA. Yes. Are you angry because I was laughing with Salvador? It was all about Tío Jeromo.

LEONARDO. Don't be a child. How could a thing like that make me angry? You will soon find out what the trouble is. I have some bad news for you.

MALVALOCA. Aha! The dogs are eating grass! Signs don't lie. Are you laughing?

LEONARDO. Yes. Listen.

MALVALOCA. Well, out with it; you frighten me.

LEONARDO. My sister is here.

MALVALOCA. I know it. He told me.

LEONARDO. Ah! So *he* told you?

MALVALOCA. Yes. Is that all? Well, don't get excited or feel badly about it, for I won't put my foot inside your house while your sister is here.

LEONARDO. Why not?

MALVALOCA. Because I should sprain my ankle going through the door! But joking aside, Leonardo, it wouldn't be right for me to come.

LEONARDO. Did—he—also—tell you that?

MALVALOCA. No, I told *him*. What Salvador said was that you thought it was all right for me to come.

LEONARDO. Ah, really? That was true, understand. But later I thought better of it. I must not act foolishly. I am very grateful to you for your resolve, Malvaloca. Do not come; I shall go to you.

MALVALOCA. Well your martyrdom is over.

Put on a happier expression. I hate to see you look sad.

LEONARDO. Why shouldn't I look sad? Loving you as I do, I have to keep you hidden like a—shameless woman.

MALVALOCA. Come, come!

The birds take flight when the rain comes down;
Periquiyo's wet from heel to crown.

I'm Periquiyo. But it's unhealthy to look beneath the surface, to remove the soil.

LEONARDO [*sadly*]. It depends upon the soil!

MALVALOCA [*bitterly*]. That's why I said it. If you only knew what kind of soil I am, in what kind of earth you have sown!

LEONARDO. Forgive me. I'd like to choke down that thought when I am with you, but when I am at your side I seem to lose all my power of will. [*They look at each other.*]

MALVALOCA [*resolutely*]. Good-bye, I'm going.

LEONARDO. Why?

MALVALOCA. Your sister may come.

LEONARDO. Don't be afraid; she isn't here. Teresona took her to see some of the sights of the village.

MALVALOCA. Then——

LEONARDO. What?

MALVALOCA. Are you going to cast La Golondrina?

LEONARDO. In a little while, yes.

MALVALOCA. Would there be time for me to see it?

LEONARDO. For you to see it? I'll tell you——

MALVALOCA. No, don't tell me anything. Even if there were time, I shouldn't wait to see it. You don't like to have me go into the shops.

LEONARDO. Aside from that, the bell will be cast like all the rest—like all those other things you have seen us cast. The mould is already in the ground——

MALVALOCA. And it's just the same shape as the broken bell. I've seen that at least.

LEONARDO. You would have been more interested in seeing how we broke up the old bell.

MALVALOCA. True enough. Why didn't you let me know?

LEONARDO. I didn't think of it.

MALVALOCA. Well, then, tell me how it was done.

LEONARDO. Simply by heating it slowly over a furnace, and by a blow of a mallet.

MALVALOCA. And it fell to pieces?

LEONARDO. Yes.

MALVALOCA. As if it were made of glass!

LEONARDO. Exactly.

MALVALOCA. And now the pieces are being melted in the crucibles?

LEONARDO. Yes.

MALVALOCA. And pretty soon the crucibles will be emptied into the ground through the funnel?

LEONARDO. Right you are. You know as much as I do about it.

MALVALOCA. So, it will be the same bell?

LEONARDO. The same, and yet another.

MALVALOCA. I remember you explained all this very well the first day we met. I was very much interested in what you told me.

LEONARDO. You have a good memory.

MALVALOCA. Yours is better, poor boy!

LEONARDO. Mine? Why?

MALVALOCA. Oh, nothing!

LEONARDO. No, you meant something when you said that.

MALVALOCA. Why shouldn't I, silly? Because I never tell you a thing about myself that doesn't stay in your head as though it were cast in bronze!

LEONARDO. Ah! That's true.

MALVALOCA. But come here, you bad boy. Are you sorry you met me?

LEONARDO. Never!

MALVALOCA. Do you—love me?

LEONARDO. How can you ask?

MALVALOCA. Well, then, what does it matter what I have been?

LEONARDO. It matters, it matters so much to me that I am only happy when I forget it.

MALVALOCA. Well, listen; I've thought of a solution.

LEONARDO. If there only were one!

MALVALOCA. Recast *me*—like La Golondrina!

LEONARDO [*perplexed*]. Like—La Golondrina?

MALVALOCA. There is a little song that speaks of it:

> "This little girl of whom I tell,
> Should be recast, like a broken bell."

Have you heard it?

LEONARDO. Never until this moment.

MALVALOCA. You might know that it was thought of by a man like you are . . . one of those men who make up all the good there is in the world. In

the song he fell in love with a woman who wanted to have the right to a better life; so he wrote these verses.

LEONARDO. How does it go?

MALVALOCA [*repeats it with full meaning*].

"This little girl of whom I tell,
Should be recast, like a broken bell."

LEONARDO [*drawing her passionately to him*]. Come!

MALVALOCA. What do you mean?

LEONARDO. Look at me.

MALVALOCA. I can't see you for my tears.

LEONARDO. Nor I you.

MALVALOCA. Let me go. [*Separates herself from him.*] I must go! Good-bye!

LEONARDO. Good-bye.

[*When* MALVALOCA *starts to open the gate upstage as she turns to go,* SISTER PIEDAD *and* MARIQUITA *enter.* MARIQUITA *is dressed in her very best. Their appearance surprises the two lovers equally.* MALVALOCA *is pleased.*]

SISTER PIEDAD. Good morning.

MALVALOCA. Leonardo, see who has come to see you.

MARIQUITA. Good morning.

LEONARDO. Come in, Sister.

MARIQUITA. You here, lady?

MALVALOCA. Yes, but I'm going now.

MARIQUITA. Going? Don't go. You'll see why I have come. Don't go.

LEONARDO [*replying to a glance from* MALVALOCA]. Please stay.

SISTER PIEDAD. Mariquita has an idea which has cost her a sleepless night.

MARIQUITA. I didn't sleep all night because I thought of it when I went to bed, and I was afraid I might forget it. [*With a tired air.*] Ah me!

MALVALOCA. Sit down here, Mariquita.

MARIQUITA. Thanks very much, my dear child.

LEONARDO. And won't you be seated also, Sister?

SISTER PIEDAD. Thank you, it is not necessary. My visit will be a very short one. La Golondrina is to be recast to-day, is she not?

LEONARDO. To-day, and very shortly.

SISTER PIEDAD. We shall go and pray that God may watch over the good work. Now I see that the

wish of our Mother Superior will be easy to carry out.

LEONARDO. What is her wish?

SISTER PIEDAD. That the bell may sound again for the first time on the day of the procession of Our Lord of the Crown of Thorns, which starts from the Carmen Home, and is very much venerated in the vicinity. It is a holiday in Las Canteras. The windows, balconies, and doorways are all decorated, the street through which the Image passes is carpeted entirely with branches and flowers, and the young girls put on new dresses made especially for the day. Oh, you shall see, you shall see!

LEONARDO. And when is it?

SISTER PIEDAD. The fourteenth of next month.

LEONARDO. We have more than time enough.

SISTER PIEDAD. So much the better. The Mother Superior will be pleased.

MALVALOCA. Tell me, Sister, may I walk behind the procession barefoot?

SISTER PIEDAD. Why shouldn't you?

LEONARDO. Barefoot!

MALVALOCA. Yes, it's a vow.

LEONARDO. When did you make it?

MALVALOCA. Just now.

SISTER PIEDAD [*with a kindly smile*]. You can think about it from now until then.

MALVALOCA. You ask why I should do it? Are you surprised? It isn't the first time I have walked behind a procession in that way. When my baby girl was sick—but that doesn't concern anybody here. What is it that Mariquita has on her mind?

SISTER PIEDAD. She will tell you.

MARIQUITA [*gets up*]. I brought this. [*She takes a small bundle of cloth from her bosom, and shows it to them.*]

LEONARDO. What is it?

MARIQUITA. The crosses and medals which belonged to my son who was killed in the wars.

LEONARDO. And why do you bring them here?

MARIQUITA. Well, you see the one wish that he had after they took him away was to listen to La Golondrina again with his mother—so I wanted them to be mixed with the metal of the bell. Can it be done?

LEONARDO. Indeed it can. All we have to do is to throw them into the crucible.

MALVALOCA. And that will be done this very minute, and by me!

MARIQUITA. By you?

MALVALOCA. Yes. Kiss them for the last time.

MARIQUITA [*after kissing the medals*]. Take them, my child, take them.

MALVALOCA. Bring them here, and come watch me do it! Did you hear, Leonardo? It takes a mother to have an idea like that.

LEONARDO. Yes. But hurry.

MARIQUITA. Then come, my child, come! [*Thus encouraged,* MALVALOCA *enters the shops with* MARIQUITA, *gazing at the medals and crosses as one who holds in her hand a great treasure.*]

SISTER PIEDAD. This woman is certainly good. She is a good woman, a good woman.

LEONARDO. Do you think so? When an irremediable misfortune befalls such a person, one rebels against everything!

SISTER PIEDAD. Against everything, brother?

LEONARDO. Sister, one would have to be a saint to resign one's self to it. Since I am a man, I cannot do so.

SISTER PIEDAD. Penitence has its fruit; so have piety and forgiveness.

LEONARDO. Love is a selfish passion.

SISTER PIEDAD. When love is great, it is also a generous one.

[MALVALOCA *and* MARIQUITA *reënter.*]

MALVALOCA. It's done. They fell into the fire, and it swallowed them. It seemed as though it were waiting for them.

MARIQUITA. My poor little boy!

SISTER PIEDAD. You have had your wish, Mariquita.

MARIQUITA. Is your mother still alive, Malvaloca?

MALVALOCA. My mother? Let's not speak of her.

MARIQUITA. Why not? Doesn't she love you?

MALVALOCA. Let's not speak of that. Yes, my mother is alive. Mariquita, she is alive; very much so. But unfortunately she is not like you. I'd like to look at her through the wrong end of a telescope, as far away as I can get!

MARIQUITA. How funny you are!

MALVALOCA. You see how I am obliged to talk about my mother? Yet I've always felt sorry for Adam because he had none to take him into her arms! *My* fate is like that.

SISTER PIEDAD. Shall we go, Mariquita?

MARIQUITA. Very well. May God repay you for the pleasure you have given me.

MALVALOCA. When La Golondrina rings again, it will seem as if your son was calling you. See if it doesn't.

SISTER PIEDAD. God be with you, Don Leonardo.

LEONARDO. Good-bye, Sister. Good-bye, Mariquita.

MARIQUITA. Good-bye.

SISTER PIEDAD. Good-bye.

MALVALOCA. Good-bye, and God bless you. [*She opens the gate for them to pass out. They both go out, smiling at her.*]

LEONARDO [*wildly—his pent-up feeling suddenly bursting forth into speech*]. Come to me, Malvaloca, come to me! I love you more and more every minute! Come, you're not going to leave me now—no, nor ever!

MALVALOCA. Hush, crazy boy!

LEONARDO. I love you for your goodness; I love you for your beauty; and I love you because you are unhappy! Look into my eyes, that I may gaze into yours and be remade again . . . by the only woman I have ever loved!

MALVALOCA. Me?

LEONARDO. Yes, you! I have never told you, but it is time you found it out!

MALVALOCA. Leonardo!

LEONARDO. You are the only one I have ever loved, and you are the only one I shall ever love! I don't know how to go on living except by remembering that you are alive! Can—you—love me—like that?

MALVALOCA. I love you even more! No one has ever spoken to me like you have!

[*At this moment* JUANELA *appears in the doorway of the house. She is nervous and anxious. The lovers, feeling her presence rather than seeing it, instinctively separate.*]

LEONARDO. Eh?

MALVALOCA. What?

JUANELA. Ah, it is she!

LEONARDO. Juanela! Sister! Come here!

JUANELA. No! Excuse me—I didn't know——

LEONARDO. Yes, you must have known. You said "It is she!" What did you mean by that?

[MALVALOCA *is abashed and overcome.* LEONARDO, *growing more excited with each word, tries to detain his sister and to win her respect and sympathy.*]

JUANELA. Nothing. No, let me go, please.

LEONARDO. No, I don't want you to go like

this. Why do you tremble before this woman? What have they told you? Who has been telling you lies?

MALVALOCA. Tío Jeromo!

JUANELA. They have told me nothing.

LEONARDO. Yes, they have! And whatever they told you, they lied! I alone have the right to tell you who this woman is, and you must believe only me. What do the others know? All they will tell you is that she is bad, bad, bad! Ah, if it is wicked to be sad, there never was a more wicked woman in the world than she!

JUANELA. Control yourself, Leonardo.

LEONARDO. But I know her life, her soul, and her sorrows! She had no one to watch over her innocence as you had. But some one who was blind, profaned and betrayed it I swear to you by our home! Forgive me, I am so excited I have lost control of my tongue. I am afraid of wounding you, too. Leave me, leave me. I shall speak to you more quietly later, but leave me now.

JUANELA. Yes, indeed I will leave you, brother. It is better—now. [*Sobbing pitifully.*] Oh, merciful God! [*She reënters the house without being able to take her eyes from him.*]

LEONARDO [*again becoming aware of* MALVALOCA'S *presence*]. They must all forgive you, and respect you. That is the mad desire of my life now. . . . That all the world shall forget what you were!

[SALVADOR'S *voice, calling from within the shops, reaches him and makes him shudder suddenly.*]

SALVADOR. Leonardo!

LEONARDO. Ah, all the world—but me!

SALVADOR [*appearing at a window*]. Leonardo.

LEONARDO. What is it?

SALVADOR. We are ready. Shall we cast La Golondrina?

LEONARDO. Yes, of course. [*To* MALVALOCA.] Are you coming?

MALVALOCA. No. I'll see you later.

LEONARDO. Good-bye. [*Goes into the shops with* SALVADOR.] Now to recast La Golondrina!

MALVALOCA [*very sorrowfully, as she bursts into tears*]. If I were only made of bronze like the bell!

End of Act II

ACT III

ACT III

A large downstairs room in LEONARDO'S *house, having white walls and a blue vaulted ceiling. Upstage is a large door through which may be seen the shabby old courtyard. To the right of the actor is another door which leads to the inner rooms. To the left, a wide grated window which opens on the street. The sill is about three feet from the ground. Beneath it is a huge window-seat. The window frame is adorned with white lace curtains and colored cords in honor of the day upon which the action takes place. There are bunches of rosemary and lentiscus entwined in the iron grating of the window. Over the sill, and fastened by iron loops over the cross bars, are pots filled with flowers. The floor is made of tiles. There is little furniture. A pine table near the window awaits the flowers which are to be thrown when the procession passes.*

It is late morning in the month of June.

JUANELA, TERESONA, *and* ALFONSA, *dressed in gala attire, are putting the finishing touches on the*

decorations of the window. With them are DOÑA ENRIQUETA *and* DIONISIA, *who have gone to the bottom of their trunks to deck themselves out.* ALFONSA *is a niece of* TERESONA'S. *She has the manners of a village maid, and has come from her home village to see the Festival of Las Canteras which is to be held on this day. She is one of the kind that wonders at and admires everything.* DOÑA ENRIQUETA *and* DIONISIA, *on the other hand, seem to wonder at and admire nothing. They are the wife and daughter of the owner of a well-known local sugar refinery and speak with an affectation of culture which, however, is rather a thin veneering.*

ALFONSA [*standing on a chair*]. Does this bunch look well, Tía Teresona?

TERESONA. Very well. Get down now and stop decorating the window—we've done enough.

JUANELA. It really is beautiful!

ALFONSA [*stepping some distance away from the window so as to see it better*]. Oh, how pretty! How pretty it is! Don't you think so?

[DOÑA ENRIQUETA *and* DIONISIA *smile at the naïve enthusiasm of* ALFONSA.]

DIONISIA. What a child she is! She admires everything.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. We do not care for these village festivals. They are too artificial.

TERESONA. Artificial? Why, I think they are very natural!

JUANELA. Don't you really like them?

DIONISIA. I do not.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Nor I.

DIONISIA. Nor does papa.

JUANELA. Perhaps it is because you are so accustomed to them year after year. Being a stranger, I must confess that I have never seen anything more picturesque—more lovely than the decorations in the streets where the procession is to pass.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Really? Why, what are you telling us?

JUANELA. What I feel, the pure truth.

ALFONSA. You ladies can't deny that there are some windows that look like regular altars, with so much white lace and so many pots of sweet basil! And then, what about the streets, that seem to be carpeted with green branches? And what a delicious smell comes through the windows! It's enough to overpower you!

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Country smells!

DIONISIA. Mint and thyme. To think of our liking such things!

TERESONA. It is because my niece is a stranger, too.

ALFONSA. I'm so glad I came from our village to see this procession. Oh, dear, how beautiful these streets are!

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Do for heaven's sake stop talking about the streets. One can see all sorts of ridiculous sights from these gaudy balconies.

DIONISIA. And all sorts of worthless rabble.

TERESONA. In the streets?

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Yes. [*Greeting some passing friends from the window.*] How do you do, Matilda?

DIONISIA. Hello, Elvira!

JUANELA. How do you do? Won't you come in a while? Very well—I'll see you later.

ALFONSA. How nicely dressed they are! And what beautiful bouquets they wear! How lovely!

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Overdone, my child, overdone.

DIONISIA. Yes, mamma, overdone.

[LOBITO *appears in the doorway upstage. He comes from the street. It is difficult to recognize him, as he is no longer the rough and*

unkempt workman of the foundry. He is now a gay village gallant. He wears a carnation behind his ear, and another in his hat; probably to offer to some one.]

LOBITO [*before any one sees him. Aside*]. Hello! Now I'll have some fun; these women are too good for us. [*Aloud.*] Good afternoon!

JUANELA. Good afternoon.

TERESONA. Come in, Lobito.

ALFONSA. Hello, Inacio!

DOÑA ENRIQUETA and DIONISIA. Good afternoon.

ALFONSA. You're lovely, too!

LOBITO. I've got to be to-day, woman; the day of the procession! The day when La Golondrina is to ring again! Don't you think we ought to appear in our very best?

ALFONSA. And he's wearing a chain, Auntie! Did you see this?

LOBITO. Of course I wear a chain.

JUANELA. And a very pretty one it is.

LOBITO. All I need is a watch to go with it.

ALFONSA. Haven't you a watch?

TERESONA. Well, you *are* a little mischief!

LOBITO. No, I haven't any. I've fastened my

matchbox to the end of the chain for a weight. Then I strike myself. I've had the girls staring at me, and when they ask me as a joke what time it is, I come back with another joke. [*Laughs.*]

ALFONSA. Oh, dear, what a way he has with him!

TERESONA. Lobito, is it true that there has been fighting in the Alameda?

LOBITO. Yes. And there will be some more between now and when the bell rings! La Sonora's friends thought that she was always to be the only bell, and more than one obstinate fool is likely to have the courage knocked out of him.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. What a set of barbarians they are!

DIONISIA. Savages.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. You see what savage people we have in this village.

JUANELA. When is the bell to ring, Lobito?

LOBITO. When the Image returns from the procession through the town and enters the Home. That is what the Mother Superior has decided. You ought to hear old blind Martin!

JUANELA. Who?

LOBITO. Martin, the blind man. He's always

been La Golondrina's bellman, poor old fellow! He is weeping like a child. You'd think they had brought a child of his back to life. He hasn't slept for three nights. He says he doesn't mind if he dies at the first stroke . . . and I really think he will. It makes your hair stand on end to hear him talk.

ALFONSA. Dear me, how queer! When does the procession pass, Inacio?

LOBITO. It went along the causeway a moment ago, so it ought to be here in about half an hour.

TERESONA. Then we must be getting the flowers ready.

ALFONSA. Shall we go and cut them?

LOBITO. Yes. I'll help you.

TERESONA. I'm going out now.

ALFONSA. Come on. [*Exit through door upstage and turns to the right.*]

TERESONA [*to* LOBITO *who starts to follow her*]. Be careful of the flowers, Lobito.

LOBITO. Better tell me to be careful of the fruit. Flowers only smell; you eat the fruit after the blossoms are all gone. Understand?

[*Exit after* ALFONSA.

TERESONA. He is incorrigible. But what are

you going to do when the girl likes him? It's natural for the boys to like the girls, and when we older people leave them alone . . . well, it's natural.

DIONISIA. Certainly, like with like.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Shall we take a little walk?

DIONISIA. Good idea! Let us take a walk.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA [*to* JUANELA]. Are you coming?

JUANELA. Why not?

DIONISIA. We shall run into many of the townspeople, but it cannot be helped.

JUANELA. What's the difference? They won't eat us.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Ah, there goes the Alcalde's wife! Let us call to her.

DIONISIA. Doña Casilda!

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Doña Casilda! Wait for us, please!

DIONISIA. Come on.

JUANELA. Very well.

[*At this moment* SALVADOR *enters through the door upstage. He also is dressed in his best.*]

SALVADOR. How are the prettiest women in the town—or out of it?

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. You flatter us. . . .

DIONISIA. Good afternoon.

JUANELA. Good afternoon—Always the same!

SALVADOR. Are you going out?

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. To take a short walk while we wait for the procession.

SALVADOR. It won't be long in coming.

DIONISIA. It should take about half an hour. We have been figuring it out.

SALVADOR. Well, this is a day to find a sweetheart in the street.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Shall we go?

DIONISIA. Yes.

SALVADOR. Beware though of strangers! The weather is fine. After yesterday's rain everything is fresh, and it is a good time for a walk I'm sure. Don't let me detain you.

DIONISIA. Come, mamma, Doña Casilda is waiting for us.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Yes, of course.

JUANELA. Go on. I'll join you presently.

[*Exeunt* DOÑA ENRIQUETA *and* DIONISIA *through the door upstage. They turn to the left.* JUANELA *remains a moment with* SALVADOR.]

TERESONA. There are few people I don't like in

this world; I can overlook most anything . . . and I say it in good faith; but I can't help disliking that woman and her daughter.

SALVADOR. What amuses me is the way they talk. They're so affected and stilted.

TERESONA. Do you know what they call her husband?

JUANELA. That will do, Teresona. Salvador——

SALVADOR. What is it? I like to see that long face.

JUANELA. Have you heard the latest?

SALVADOR. No. More nonsense of Leonardo's?

JUANELA. Another fuss. You knew about yesterday?

SALVADOR. Yes. He struck some one for saying I don't know what about Malvaloca. They told me about it last night. What is it to-day?

JUANELA. Probably because of yesterday's doings he insists upon the woman's coming here to watch the procession with us.

SALVADOR. But I thought she was going to walk barefooted behind the procession!

JUANELA. She wanted to, but he dissuaded her.

SALVADOR. So then he persuaded her to come here. The man is crazy.

JUANELA. Just think of it! What will people say? And these friends of mine—I don't know *what* they will do! But others who have heard about it have excused themselves from coming. Speak to him; not to persuade him to prevent her from coming, for since he wishes it, and this is his house——

SALVADOR. No, for heaven's sake!

JUANELA. But advise him to be prudent, to use discretion, to have a little consideration for others. He has to live with people——

SALVADOR. All I can say will be useless. But I shall speak to him once more since you wish it. It's the last time, though.

JUANELA. Even if it is the last time, don't neglect to speak to him, Salvador. I can't discuss things with him, because I have good-naturedly let him have his own way in whatever he wished ever since I was a little girl. I have always had absolute faith in his goodness. "Whatever my brother does is surely right" is what I have thought and felt all my life. But now, now I confess, Salvador, my head is in a whirl.

SALVADOR. He's mad.

JUANELA. No, he's not mad. He doesn't talk like a madman. Deep down in my heart, I under-

stand my brother, don't forget that. Reason cannot overcome feeling; but there is always a reason for every feeling.

SALVADOR. Very well, don't worry. I'll speak to him. You'd better go now. Your friends are waiting for you.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA [*from the street*]. Juanela, aren't you coming?

JUANELA. Yes, just a moment. I'm sorry. [*To* SALVADOR.] I am going to tell Leonardo that you are here. [*Exit through the door upstage, to the right. Presently she is seen to cross the courtyard to the left.*]

SALVADOR. Innocent child! This is a nice kind of a vacation her brother has given her!

TERESONA. It's other people's fault; they poison their thoughts. He is good; she is good; and so is the other woman. Can anything bad possibly happen to three such really good people? Nonsense! Listen to me: Is there, or is there not, a God? Well, if there is one, and if nobody does anything unless He wishes it—why, all I say is God is old enough to know what He's about!

SALVADOR. That's seeing things I suppose in God's way.

TERESONA. No more and no less. Here he comes.

SALVADOR. God?!!

TERESONA. Don Leonardo. You always will joke! I'm going to take a look now at the other couple.

[LEONARDO *enters from the house, through the door upstage.* TERESONA *lets him pass, and then withdraws toward the right, watching the two partners.*]

LEONARDO. Juanela told me you wanted me. What do you want?

SALVADOR. To see you, first of all. Then—to chat with you a while. Why, it's been a week since we exchanged a word! I thought somehow you were avoiding me.

LEONARDO. Avoiding you?

SALVADOR. Don't worry, I'm not going to examine you about business affairs. I have the utmost confidence in you.

LEONARDO. So you sent for me to listen to some of your foolish jokes?

SALVADOR. The difference is in our conception of life. You take it too seriously, and I, perhaps, too lightly.

LEONARDO. Perhaps.

SALVADOR. Only jokers make all the more

impression when they become serious. And I am serious now.

LEONARDO. It is a miracle.

SALVADOR. Yes, serious. [*Affectionately.*] How's your heart, partner?

LEONARDO. Breaking, but happy.

SALVADOR. Very good. And your head—cracked, but happy?

LEONARDO. As you say.

SALVADOR. And all for a woman.

LEONARDO. For whom better?

SALVADOR. Well, let's have a word about that woman.

LEONARDO. I would prefer that you let that subject alone.

SALVADOR. It is several days since we talked about her.

LEONARDO. And there is no reason why we should talk again.

SALVADOR. Yes, there is, now.

LEONARDO. No one has a right to speak of this woman to me—least of all, you.

SALVADOR. It isn't the usual topic this time. It is another matter. Leonardo, this woman is a great source of anxiety to your sister.

LEONARDO. No, it is I who am. Not on her account, nor on mine; but on account of what people will say. I know it. I can see it. But my sister is going back to my aunt and uncle, and the day will come when she will think as I do.

SALVADOR. Ah! Your sister is leaving?

LEONARDO. Yes. Very soon. The day after to-morrow. I don't want any one to share my sacrifice, not even the woman whom I have taught to be broad-minded and strong.

SALVADOR. Are you absolutely sure this experiment will endure?

LEONARDO. It has never been an experiment, and it will last all my life.

SALVADOR. All your life?

LEONARDO. Yes. You have never loved unless you saw a free avenue of escape; you cannot understand me. Malvaloca is my whole life. Painfully but joyfully, I join my lot with hers!

SALVADOR. No, I do not understand you. Deuce take your excuses and theories! They are too thin. But, on the other hand, I know how to dispose of a certain other obstacle, even if I do not understand your idea of sacrificing yourself for this little bird you have picked up in the street.

LEONARDO [*troubled*]. What other obstacle? And for God's sake be careful what you say!

SALVADOR. Listen to me, and answer me truthfully; you have always preached to me. I suggested this course to you some time ago, and now, when I least expected it, the crisis has come. Would it surprise you very much if I disappeared from the village?

LEONARDO. From Las Canteras? But where would you go?

SALVADOR. That isn't the question. Would it surprise you?

LEONARDO. Perhaps not.

SALVADOR. And would you be glad? The truth, Leonardo!

LEONARDO. Truthfully, yes.

SALVADOR. I know it. I know, too, that you will regret it, because our friendship isn't a trifle. But I ought to leave you, and I shall. Without being able to help it, I wound you, I hurt you, and call to your mind things which you would like obliterated from the eyes of the world. And whether you succeed in forgetting them or not you will be saved from many an ache by not seeing me. I have never been able to understand man's love for

woman; but, I *do* understand the affection of one man for another. It is a part of my temperament, probably. I have spent my life deceiving women, yet I have never been able to deceive a man. And the funny thing is, I like women better! Do you understand me?

LEONARDO. I understand you are very generous. Forgive me if I ever called you an egotist.

SALVADOR. Good. Well, it's all over now. Give me your hand.

LEONARDO. Yes, indeed.

SALVADOR. And we'll always be friends, no matter how far apart, shall we not?

LEONARDO. Whatever you wish. I can find no words.

SALVADOR. Well, then, I'll talk while you are in that fix and keep up your spirits. Don't be foolish; shake off this depression. Cheer up. Remember that there are more women than there are stars, and that it is a shame for a man like you——

LEONARDO. Don't! Keep still!

SALVADOR. Why should I keep still? Do you know that there never was a man who carried things to such extremes as you do?

LEONARDO. Do you know that my soul is my

own? And my grief is in my own heart. It is my grief, just as it is my satisfaction to suffer it! How can I forget? Happy the men who do not shrink at the thought of the others who have been before them when they kiss a woman! I am not jealous of you nor of any one else—I am jealous of a whole past. And that is the life I want for mine! Pity me. Some one is coming. I don't want any one to see that I have been weeping.

[*Embraces his friend and exit through the door at the right.*]

SALVADOR. My poor partner!

[MALVALOCA *enters vivaciously from the street, as though following* LEONARDO. *She is dressed simply and wears a wide shawl of black lace over her shoulders.*]

MALVALOCA. Where is Leonardo? Wasn't he here?

SALVADOR. Hello!

MALVALOCA. Hello! Wasn't *he* here?

SALVADOR. He *was*. But he heard footsteps and went out, because some one was coming.

MALVALOCA. And it was only me!

SALVADOR. He didn't recognize your step.

MALVALOCA. That was on account of the noise in the street. Where is he?

SALVADOR. He went in there.

MALVALOCA. This way?

SALVADOR. Yes. Listen.

MALVALOCA. What do you want?

SALVADOR. I want to tell you something.

MALVALOCA. You can write it.

SALVADOR. Write it?

MALVALOCA. Yes. I know how to read and write now. He taught me.

SALVADOR. To write, too?

MALVALOCA. I don't know it all yet. But I can write some of the letters. I know how to write his name and mine. I'll see you later.

SALVADOR. Wait.

MALVALOCA. No!

SALVADOR. Why not?

MALVALOCA. Because I want to lose sight of you.

SALVADOR. You, too?

MALVALOCA. Me, too.

SALVADOR. I'm not surprised. The world is full of unpleasantness of that sort. You'll find that out pretty soon. Do you know I'm thinking of dissolving the partnership?

MALVALOCA. A good idea.

SALVADOR. So I can leave Las Canteras, of course.

MALVALOCA. That's a still better idea than the other!

SALVADOR. You like the idea?

MALVALOCA. Uh! You've had enough. I like it for my sake, and for his. A retreating enemy——

SALVADOR. Am I your enemy, Malvaloca?

MALVALOCA. At present, yes. But all things are healed by time. Now run along, please.

SALVADOR. I'm going. Doesn't your conscience prick you for what you have done to this man?

MALVALOCA. What have I done but love him?

SALVADOR. You've crazed him.

MALVALOCA. I'm crazy, too—with the same kind of madness. We've had the same fate.

SALVADOR. Is it possible?

MALVALOCA. It isn't always that two people are joined together and only one in love. Here are two of us in love and in love with each other.

SALVADOR. Well, I advise you, Malvaloca——

MALVALOCA. Come, you're a pilgrim now; go and do your preaching in the desert. I will pay just as much attention to you there.

SALVADOR. You're right.

"I've seen many a splendid castle
"In ruins on the ground." . . .

Well, since he wants to keep you from me—God bless you! We won't see each other again.

MALVALOCA. Good-bye.

SALVADOR. Your hand, girl. Won't you even give me your hand for the sake of the past?

MALVALOCA. I'll give you nothing for the sake of the past.

SALVADOR. Just a good-bye handshake—like two friends.

MALVALOCA. Like that, yes.

SALVADOR. Thanks. Good-bye.

MALVALOCA. Good-bye.

SALVADOR. I'm just the same as I ever was.

MALVALOCA. Well, I'm another person, now.

SALVADOR. Good-bye.

[*Exit into the street. Conflicting emotions distract his mind.*]

MALVALOCA. He's right to go. But where is Leonardo? I don't dare go in there.

[ALFONSA *and* LOBITO *reënter from the garden.* ALFONSA *carries a basket of flowers which*

she sets upon the table. LOBITO'S *carnations are on her breast.*]

ALFONSA. Teresona told me to put these upon the table.

LOBITO. Wouldn't it be better to make some bouquets?

ALFONSA. No, sir. When they are loose, there seem to be more of them, and we can throw them better.

MALVALOCA. Lobito! Is it you?

LOBITO [*turning around*]. Eh? Good afternoon. You! In this house?

ALFONSA. Good afternoon. [*Looks at her in wonder.*] Ah!

MALVALOCA. I shouldn't have known you. You look as grand as the Alcalde himself.

[ALFONSA *breaks into laughter which is loud enough to be heard in her own town.* LOBITO *also laughs.*]

LOBITO. My, how she did enjoy that!

MALVALOCA. Are you dressed up like this so as to catch a sweetheart?

LOBITO. We're beyond that sort of thing now.

Enter JUANELA, *hastily and excitedly.*

JUANELA. Good afternoon.

MALVALOCA [*somewhat disconcerted*]. Good afternoon.

JUANELA. I saw you come in, so I left my friends. Where is Leonardo?

MALVALOCA. I don't know.

[JUANELA *looks at both doors.*]

LOBITO [*to* ALFONSA]. Let's go pick some more flowers.

ALFONSA. Very well. We can't go too far in the service of the Lord.

LOBITO. We won't be missed here, either.

[*Exeunt* LOBITO *and* ALFONSA. JUANELA'S *eyes open wide with curiosity as she gazes at* MALVALOCA.]

MALVALOCA. Did you know I was coming?

JUANELA. My brother told me.

MALVALOCA. I didn't want to come, really I didn't.

JUANELA. I knew that, too. But when he sets his heart upon a thing—you understand——

MALVALOCA. He has his own way. Excuse me for saying so, but when I am with him, I feel I have a right anywhere. But without him, I feel as if I didn't belong anywhere—least of all, here.

JUANELA. Why?

MALVALOCA. You know without my telling you. Had we better say any more?

JUANELA. He'll be here in a minute.

MALVALOCA. I can't see this thing so clearly—the way you can. You are his sister.

JUANELA. It hurts me to see him downhearted, to see him weep.

MALVALOCA. You cannot love without tears.

JUANELA. Do you think so?

MALVALOCA. Leonardo was unfortunate enough to run across me pretty well along in life. When I saw how he loved me, I made up my mind I would let him go, but it was too late. I was caught in the same chain myself.

JUANELA. Is it so strong?

MALVALOCA. There is no anvil on which it can be broken, and no fire which can melt it. A heart-beat forged the chain—and I never knew I had a heart till I felt his beating at my side. His sang there, and mine answered his like a bird. I'd rather die than ever stop listening and answering to its sound.

JUANELA. I can see that it was most unfortunate.

MALVALOCA. For Leonardo, as you say. For me, it was like being born again. This is my punish-

ment: that I should have to be born again in order to be the woman he deserves.

JUANELA. But that is impossible!

MALVALOCA. That word "impossible" is the cause of all our tears.

JUANELA. It is very sad.

MALVALOCA. My life has been sadder; and I'm still on my feet.

JUANELA. Which is sadder still?

MALVALOCA. But child, don't you see? This is the day I begin to live! My former life—— What do you know about pain? If it were written on my forehead then of course you could read. I don't want to exaggerate my misfortune. The fact is that Leonardo and I have entered a tunnel without any way out and with only the light which we bring on the train. But don't you worry: little by little there will be more light. God has lighted my steps. In my greatest trouble, something unexpected has always happened to light me the way. It is natural to me—like my black hair—— Who is coming?

[DOÑA ENRIQUETA *and* DIONISIA *enter unexpectedly. They are somewhat out of breath. After them* ALFONSA *and* LOBITO *appear with more flowers, which they put upon the table*

as before. Their attention is attracted by the conversation between JUANELA *and the mother and daughter, but they content themselves with comments upon it to each other with significant gestures.*]

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Goodness me! I never saw such a hubbub!

DIONISIA. And how ill-mannered the people are!

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. You did right to turn back. [*With a surprised and disgusted air as she sees* MALVALOCA.] Eh?

DIONISIA. What?

MALVALOCA. Good afternoon.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. What does this mean?

[*There is a painful silence. Mother and daughter exchange a glance of astonishment.*]

JUANELA [*very much embarrassed*]. So you found walking difficult in the street? I thought you would.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Walking was difficult there, and conditions are uncomfortable here. We had better go.

JUANELA. Must you go?

DIONISIA. Yes, I'm not feeling very well.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Yes, she's not feeling very well.

JUANELA. I'll make her a cup of tea.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. No, thank you. Come, my dear.

DIONISIA. Very well, mamma.

JUANELA. But aren't you going to stay to watch the procession?

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Yes, but we shall see it as it enters the church. Come!

DIONISIA. Yes, we must be going.

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Good afternoon, Juanela.

JUANELA. Good afternoon. You don't know how sorry I——

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Never mind the explanation. Good-bye. [*To* DIONISIA, *as she starts to go.*] Did you see, my child? Did you see?

DIONISIA. Did you see, mamma?

DOÑA ENRIQUETA. Heavens, what shamelessness!

[*Exeunt haughtily upstage and to the left.* ALFONSA *and* LOBITO *have preceded them a little through the same door, but to the right.*]

MALVALOCA [*humbly, to* JUANELA]. Did they leave because they saw *me?* [JUANELA, *without intending it, makes a gesture of assent.*] I'm sorry for you, more than I am for myself. You see how it is. If I hadn't come——

LEONARDO *enters through door at the right.*

LEONARDO. What is this?

MALVALOCA. God bless us!

LEONARDO. What was it? What were you saying?

JUANELA. Oh, nothing!

LEONARDO. Yes, tell me what it was.

JUANELA. Doña Enriqueta and her daughter—came——

LEONARDO. And went away when they saw Malvaloca. Am I right?

MALVALOCA and JUANELA. Yes.

LEONARDO. Good riddance! Other friends of ours declined to come because they already knew—another good riddance! Every one according to his own conscience, but why then make a parade of Christ through the streets?

JUANELA. We must have more flowers than this to throw when He passes. [*Exit upstage to the right.*

LEONARDO. Now you see, they avoid you.

MALVALOCA. Your sister doesn't.

LEONARDO. She may not, but the other women do.

MALVALOCA. Let them avoid me. So long as you don't——

LEONARDO. Is that all you want?

MALVALOCA. Have I any other love in the world? No one ever offered me the protection that you do. I might just as well say "I am yours" at once, and with me it is something more than words . . . Leonardo, I am yours!

LEONARDO. You are mine!

MALVALOCA. Yours! Because I live only for you, and because your joy is my joy. Lift your eyes from the ground and look at me. Why, I'm getting jealous of the very tiles of the floor! Come! Now I see you are smiling. Why, all I have are your arms, and I have found shelter there as one finds shelter beneath the branches of a tree because there it is calm and at peace! [*With a sudden transition.*] But I don't want you to be a weeping willow. I prefer an orange tree which blossoms and gives fruit, and which never loses its leaves in the winter. Do you understand?

LEONARDO [*passionately*]. I am indeed a tree that shelters you, and your words are the air that gives me life.

MALVALOCA. How romantic you are! And how I *do* love you, you big earthquake!

LEONARDO. How happy we are to love one an-

other like this! The rest of the world no longer exists—just you and I.

MALVALOCA. Our love has been like a torch. Uh! I was carrying my little load of wood alone on my back; then you began to smile and in half an hour the whole forest was ablaze! And there is nothing like that fire, is there?

LEONARDO. Nothing like the fire, nor like you.

MALVALOCA. How nice it is to be in love! You are with the person you love more when you are away from him than when you are with him. You wake up at night, and you can see no one else. You sleep, and you dream about him. You get up in the morning, and all you expect is to see him coming from somewhere. He may or he may not come. Then you say to yourself: He told me so-and-so yesterday—or maybe he didn't tell me. He smiled or he didn't smile. He is crying; he is jealous; what a funny way he throws his hat in the chair! He is going. No, don't go . . . But he must go . . . Come back then in the afternoon, please do . . . and be sure . . . please come back. He goes. Good-bye . . . Then he comes back all of a sudden to surprise me! Great heavens! There is nothing like love!

LEONARDO. Have you been in love very many times, Malvaloca?

MALVALOCA. Who? I? Only once. But I've had echoes.

LEONARDO. Only once? With whom?

MALVALOCA. Don Pelayo! [LEONARDO *smiles.*] Wasn't it Don Pelayo who conquered the Asturias—or have you deceived me?

LEONARDO. I never deceive you.

MALVALOCA. Well, then, love seems to have had some connection with Don Pelayo. I fell in love with you, foundryman, with only you in the world! With you—and you're nobler, too, than Don Pelayo. But I warn you first: Don Pelayo has a street named after him in Seville. Somebody I know lived in number three. Who can say but that was the beginning of our love?

LEONARDO [*charmed*]. Who can say?

MALVALOCA. Do you remember the day we met in the Home?

LEONARDO. Could I forget it?

MALVALOCA. One look, and you could feel the flash of lightning which always strikes people who are going to fall in love.

LEONARDO. And then—after you had gone——

MALVALOCA. Yes, then you followed me! I was so happy!

LEONARDO. Were you really pleased?

MALVALOCA. Uh! Then I stopped on a corner —as if I didn't know where to go.

LEONARDO. And I came up to you upon the excuse of showing you the way.

MALVALOCA. And the ways we were looking for lay together . . . and we took the same road, didn't we, Leonardo?

LEONARDO. And we will never abandon it, will we?

MALVALOCA. No, my sweet. But how wonderfully God brings things about! He led me there to ask for some one else—so as to meet the man who was to be mine!

LEONARDO [*with sudden sadness*]. To ask for some one else?

MALVALOCA. Yes, for another. To meet you! Now don't you mourn like a cypress tree; you were an orange in full bloom. The other has gone forever!

LEONARDO. How do you know?

MALVALOCA. Because I am a fortune teller and clairvoyant.

LEONARDO. He told you? You bade each other good-bye?

MALVALOCA. Yes.

LEONARDO. When?

MALVALOCA. Here, a little while ago after you left him. He went away, and may God protect him and keep him well.

LEONARDO. He went away; yes, *he* went away . . . but will those thoughts go away—those thoughts of the past which centred in him?

MALVALOCA. Leonardo!

LEONARDO. Malvaloca, my soul, they are stronger than my will!

MALVALOCA. Oh, why did I call them up!

LEONARDO. You see this, the one love of my life, suffers this torment, which gnaws at my heart like a dull pain—even when he is farthest from my sight!

MALVALOCA. Don't, Leonardo! Oh, if only some one could root up those horrid thoughts—could tear them out by the roots!

LEONARDO. They would spring up again. Why, the more I listen to you, and see you, and love you, the more am I saddened when I feel the shame of your former life!

MALVALOCA. No—no, Leonardo, not that! If my love must always hurt you, I shall leave you.

LEONARDO. Never! Not that, surely!

MALVALOCA. Well, then, kill me!

LEONARDO. That least of all! I want you to live—by my side, consoling me, making me laugh when you laugh, or else making me cry, sharing my joys and my sorrows as I look into your eyes, kiss your mouth, and stroke your hair . . . that's how I want you, I love you!

MALVALOCA. Leonardo, you're mad!

LEONARDO. No! One fear keeps me from going mad.

MALVALOCA. What fear?

LEONARDO [*looking at her very sharply, with frenzied exaltation*]. That if I were mad, I should not know you when I saw you.

MALVALOCA. Come here! Why, you're worse than mad! Calm yourself and that fiery head of yours, which is burning you up. Why, I love you and you only—you have made me into another woman. It hurts me more than it does you to have the marks of my former life on my body. But what did it matter to me what I was before I met you? Little less than nothing. I shook off my

sins as one shakes off the snow. Then I met you; you spoke to me as no one ever had spoken before; you taught me to love, your love brought tears to my eyes, and in those tears I saw clearly what I was, what you were, and what my former life had been. I thought I should find consolation in you, and now your thoughts take that from me. Either bury them or me, Leonardo, deep under the ground and never let Malvaloca trouble you any more!

LEONARDO. Bury you? Put you under the ground? Like the recast bell. An idea—an idea —— Once more the little verse! Under the ground—— Oh, if that were only possible!

MALVALOCA. Hush! Let us not torture ourselves any more.

LEONARDO [*enlarging upon his idea as in ecstasy, though with regret*]. To form your beautiful body in wax, redden it with my blood, cover it with earth, throw the pieces into the fire in the crucible, purify them with the living flames, then take you out again, pure, clean, another being—yet the same! New, spotless, without a past, but the same! With those same eyes, that mouth, and that great and good soul in which my whole being is consumed!

MALVALOCA. Hush, hush! What infatuation! What dreams! Hush! Why, you're crying!

LEONARDO. Of course, I am crying. Why shouldn't I cry? Only the irremediable things draw tears from men!

MALVALOCA. Hush! I hear some one!

LEONARDO. What do I care?

MALVALOCA. Can the procession be coming?

LEONARDO. The procession?

MALVALOCA. Could they have seen us from the street?

LEONARDO. I don't know, nor do I care.

[JUANELA, *approaching, calls from off stage.*]

JUANELA. Leonardo!

MALVALOCA. Your sister!

LEONARDO. My sister?

MALVALOCA. Yes. Dry your eyes.

LEONARDO. And you, too!

[JUANELA *reënters from the door through which she went out. She is followed by* TERESONA, ALFONSA, *and* LOBITO.]

JUANELA. The procession is at the corner.

LEONARDO. Really? So soon?

TERESONA. Good afternoon.

MALVALOCA. Good afternoon.

TERESONA. The Image is coming.

ALFONSA. Here it is! Here it is! Inacio, you must explain everything to me!

[*The four have scarcely entered before they go up to the window.* MALVALOCA *and* LEONARDO *remain apart. Soon the strains of the town band which follows the Redeemer are heard in the distance, and then draw nearer, more clearly and clearly heard.* ALFONSA, *ingenuously enthusiastic, comments upon the procession with* LOBITO.]

TERESONA [*to* MALVALOCA]. Won't you stand with us?

MALVALOCA. Thank you, I'm all right here.

LOBITO. The Cross! See the Cross!

ALFONSA. My, how gorgeous! Is it all silver?

LOBITO. All solid silver!

ALFONSA. Look at the man who carries it! Ah! See the children! How cunning they are with their little candles held in their handkerchiefs!

LOBITO. The whole school and the Academy are there. Those who haven't new neckties, wear new shoes!

ALFONSA. Oh, do look at that little boy dressed

like an angel! Look, Aunty, and you, Señorita, look how beautiful he is!

TERESONA. We see him, girl, we see him. Keep your eyes open and wait.

ALFONSA. My, his wings look like glass! I wonder who his mother is? And who are those men?

LOBITO. The most prominent men of the village. There is the Alcalde.

ALFONSA. Which one?

LOBITO. The one with the silver staff.

ALFONSA. With whiskers?

LOBITO. Yes.

JUANELA and TERESONA. The Image of Christ!

JUANELA. The flowers!

TERESONA and ALFONSA. The flowers! The flowers!

LOBITO. I'm going to ask González to halt here. Then I'm going to hurry to the church door to wait for the image to come—— You know why!

ALFONSA. Take care to neglect nothing!

[*Exit* LOBITO *through the door upstage, to the left.* JUANELA, TERESONA, *and* ALFONSA *have crossed to the table for the flowers.* JUANELA *looks benevolently at* MALVALOCA

who is still somewhat constrained, and with an impulse of deep piety, grasping a handful of flowers, goes to her and places them sweetly in her hands so that she may throw them as the Image passes.]

JUANELA. You must take some, too.

MALVALOCA. Thank you very much.

[*The four group themselves at the window.* LEONARDO *follows, keeping apart, however, watching intently. From the street a faint fragrance of incense arises. The Image has stopped in front of the window. Meanwhile the band has ceased playing. The four women throw all their flowers to the Image of Christ, then pray in silence.* MALVALOCA *leaves the window and prays on her knees by the table, where the flowers were, weeping softly.*]

TERESONA. A woman is going to sing a hymn.

JUANELA. Who is she?

TERESONA. I don't know her.

JUANELA. She has a child in her arms.

ALFONSA. Oh, so she has! It looks like a little rosebud.

TERESONA. Hush!

[*The woman sings with earnest devotion the following hymn in a shrill voice:*

O Christ, thou blessed Redeemer,
Look down from Heaven above;
And lay thy tenderest blessing
On this, the child I love!

The four women kneel, wiping their eyes. The procession resumes its march again. The band plays and moves off. JUANELA, TERESONA, *and* ALFONSA *arise.* MALVALOCA *remains on her knees for a time.*]

ALFONSA. What a procession! It was like glowing coals of gold!

JUANELA. How brilliant it was! How many flowers!

TERESONA. This is a great day in Las Canteras! Let's go up on the roof and watch it as it goes into the church.

JUANELA. Yes, indeed! It will be worth the trouble. Come!

ALFONSA. Yes, come on.

[*The three women go out through the door upstage, to the right. When* MALVALOCA

sees she is alone with her lover, she gets up, runs to him, and sobbing, hides her face on his breast.]

LEONARDO [*embracing her, profoundly moved*]. Malvaloca!

MALVALOCA. I am with you! Protect me and look down on me with pity as you hang upon your Cross! Don't ever leave me! When you stop loving me, kill me! But meanwhile, let me be with you—with you!

LEONARDO. Yes, with me! Eternally tormented but eternally happy! Overshadowed by the same griefs, torn by the prongs of the same thorns, but always—together!

MALVALOCA. Together—you and I!

LEONARDO. You and I!

[*Far off in the tower, welcoming the Image of Him who was able to pardon a sinful woman, the first vibration of La Golondrina, as she is rung by the hands of blind Martin, comes stealing through the air. The two lovers, trembling, move closer together in each other's arms.*]

MALVALOCA. La Golondrina!

LEONARDO. La Golondrina! Listen—listen—

how triumphant she sounds! How I have striven and longed for this hour!

MALVALOCA. You recast her, you! Listen to her—listen to her!

LEONARDO. She sings of universal love! Her voice speaks with a new meaning to my heart. I will also recast your life by the warmth of my kisses, by the fire of this wild love of mine, which is as great even as your misfortune!

MALVALOCA. With you—to be with you——!

[*La Golondrina, whose notes at first were subdued and gravely slow, now breaks forth into a lively, happy song, vibrant with the note of victory, proclaiming to the fields and villages the life that is reborn.*]

END OF THE PLAY

NOTES FOR A CRITICAL STUDY OF "MALVALOCA"

"Malvaloca" is differentiated from the usual dramas of local or provincial customs by the absence of an ulterior aim, whether didactic or otherwise. It is similar in this respect to the lighter Irish plays, to which the manner of the Quinteros bears an affinity. But the Quinteros are more façile. We feel that it would have been an easy matter for them to have composed, in odd moments, the entire repertory of the Irish theatre.

The realism of the Quinteros is not to be confounded with that of the peasant drama, either of Spain or the rest of Europe. It is more impressionistic and less insistent, having little in common with those tragedies of blood and death. Nor has it any sociological bias.

The plot of "Malvaloca" is of the oldest in the history of the stage. The story of the unfortunate woman whose life has not sullied the purity of her

soul—which remains white like snow—is one whose appeal never fails. The authors accept it as a conventional device which is necessary to the conduct of the action; yet it never obscures the dialogue, nor does it becloud the atmosphere. No dependence is placed upon complications; the situations are few and far between. The only dramatic moments in the familiar sense are at the recasting of the bell at the end of the second act, and in the third act when the procession passes and *La Golondrina* is rung again. But both the recasting and the procession occur off stage.

There are no villains. Tío Jeromo is an engaging rogue, doubtless rather unreliable, but it would be ungallant to doubt that Doña Enriqueta and her daughter would show themselves capable upon occasion of the most exalted conduct. The moral conflict is no more important than the theatrical one. Leonardo is no better than Salvador—he is less worldly-wise, that is all; more sentimental. Note how Salvador incurs no odium in the reader's mind when he announces that he has abandoned Malvaloca and her child. We do not believe, after all, that he can be so bad. When, at the end of the play, he sees that Leonardo is jealous of him and realizes

that he is in earnest, he eliminates himself and goes away in the interest of his friend. It seems almost like a concession to prejudice.

The ideas are the small change of the mind common among all peoples—Leonardo hesitates to marry Malvaloca because of her past; the marriage is unwelcome in the eyes of the sister; Salvador is felt to be a disturbing element. The audience leaves the theatre with precisely the conceptions of life with which it came.

In sketching the life of Andalusia, the Quinteros have solved the problem of a drama of sunshine. They have achieved success in well-nigh one hundred plays and are without serious rivals in any country when we consider the portrayal of local customs in the more popular field.

In its original form the play was dedicated to the distinguished savant, Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo.

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